

MUSEUM

OF
Foreign Literature and Science.

FROM THE LONDON MAGAZINE.

THE SON AND HEIR.

I do not wish to mention how the following pages came into my possession. I scarcely know to whose history they relate; but have at times imagined to that of an Earl of A——, whose story bore some resemblance to the circumstances here mentioned. These papers, few as they are, seem evidently imperfect, and were, I should think, hastily and carelessly written. I have inquired in vain after those which are wanting, for the conclusion is certainly abrupt and unsatisfactory.—CYRIL.

*August the 1st, A. D. 16**.*

I do heartily thank my God, that I have at last determined to write down in detail many circumstances connected with the event which has made my life on earth a state of shame and misery. I am a less wretched creature than I have been; but there is no rest for my wounded spirit, till it shall please the blessed God to take me from this world. I dare to hope that death will take with my poor mortal body, the load of guilt and anguish, which now lieth heavy on my spirit. I found not this hope in myself; I knew not of it, till I read of One who washeth with his blood the guilty conscience; who with his searching spirit visits the loathsome chambers of the heart; and although his light showeth there sins long forgotten, or all unobserved till then, each one bearing a visible form and substance; yet there is a peace that the world knoweth not, which cometh often where that purest light hath shined long. Do I dream? or hath not this light, this sacred peace, come into my sad heart? the light and peace are but one spirit, but the nature of that spirit is such, that, till it hath purged from the sight its dull and mortal mists, the soul seeth nothing but its dazzling brightness. Then gradually doth the light take unto itself a form, even that dove-like form which descended visibly on the head of the meekest and holiest son of man.

What I am about to write, I wish to be seen; I would make my story a warning to others. I would wish my crime to be known, my memory to be execrated in this world, if by means of my example the remorse which I feel might be spared to another; if the remembrance of my guilt might cool the boiling blood, and stop the mad fury, of some individual whose disposition may resemble mine.

My youth was passed in the thoughtless and extravagant gaiety of the French court. My temper was always violent; and I returned home one morning, long after midnight, frantic with rage at
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some imaginary insult which I had received. My servant endeavoured to speak to me as I entered the house, but I repulsed him violently, and rushed up to my room. I locked the door, and sat down instantly to write a challenge. My hand trembled so much that it would not hold the pen: I started up and paced the room: the pen was again in my hand, when I heard a low voice speaking earnestly at the door, entreating to be admitted. The voice was that of my father's old and favourite servant. I opened the door to him. The old man looked upon me with a very sorrowful countenance, and I hastily demanded the reason of his appearance. He stared at me with surprise, and spoke not: he walked to the table where I had sat down, and took from it a letter which in my rage I had not noticed. It announced to me the dangerous illness of my father; it was written by my mother, and entreatingly besought me instantly to return to them—Before dawn I was far from Paris. My father's residence was in the north of England. I arrived here only in time to follow the corpse of my beloved father to the grave. Immediately on my return from the funeral, my mother sent to me, requesting my attendance in her own apartment. Traces of deep-seated grief were fresh upon her fine countenance, but she received me with calm seriousness. Love for her living child had struggled with her sorrow for the dead; and she had chosen that hour to rouse me from the follies, from the sins of my past life. My mother was always a superior creature. I felt, as I listened to her, the real dignity of a Christian matron's character. She won me by the truth, the affection, the gentleness of her words. She spoke plainly of my degrading conduct, but she did not upbraid me. She set before me the new duties which I was called upon to perform. She said, "I know you will not trifle with those duties. You are not your own, my son; you must not live to yourself; you profess the name of Christian, you can hold no higher profession. God hath said to each of us, 'My son, give me thine heart.' Have you given your heart and its desires to God? Can you be that pitiful creature—a half Christian? I have spoken thus, because I know that if you have clear ideas of your first duties, and do strive to perform them, then will your relative duties be no longer lightly regarded. Oh my son, God knows what I feel in speaking to you thus in my heaviest hour of affliction, and I can only speak as a feeble and perplexed woman. I know not how to counsel you, but I do beseech you to think for yourself, and to pray earnestly to God for his wisdom and guidance." Before I left my mother's presence, she spoke to me also on my master passion, anger, mad ungovernable rage. She told me that even in the early years of my childhood, she had trembled at my anger,—she confessed that she had dreaded to hear while I was absent, that it had plunged me into some horrid crime. She knew not how just her fears had been; for had not my father's death recalled me to England, I should probably have been the murderer of that thoughtless stripling who had unknowingly provoked me, and whom I was about to challenge to fight on the morning I left Versailles.

My mother did not speak to me in vain. I determined to turn at once from my former ways, to regulate my conduct by the high and holy principles of the religion I professed, and to reside on my own estate in habits of manly and domestic simplicity.

About three years after I had succeeded to the titles and possessions of my forefathers, I became the husband of the lady Jane N—e, and I thought myself truly happy. Two years passed away, and every day endeared my sweet wife to my heart, but I was not quite happy. We had no child; I had but one wish; one blessing seemed alone denied—the birth of a son. My thoughts, in all their wanderings, reverted to one hope—the birth of a son—an heir to the name, the rank, the estates of my family. When I knelt before God, I forgot to pray that he would teach me what to pray for; I did not entreat that his wisdom would direct me how to use what his goodness gave. No, I prayed as for my life, I prayed without ceasing, but I chose the blessing. I prayed for a son—my prayers were at last granted, a son was born to us—a beautiful healthy boy. I thought myself perfectly happy. My delight was more than ever to live in the pleasant retirement of my own home, so that year after year passed away, and only settled me down more entirely in the habits of domestic life. My boy grew up to be a tall and healthy lad; his intellect was far beyond his years; and I loved to make him my companion, as much from the charming freshness of his thoughts, as from the warmth of my attachment towards the child. I learned to wonder at the satisfaction I had once felt in mere worldly society, as I studied the character of my son. He was not without the faults which all children possess, which are rooted deep in human nature; but in all his faults, in his deceit, and what child is not taught deceit by his own heart? there was a charming awkwardness, an absence of all worldly trick, which appeared then very new to me. I used all my efforts to prevent vice from becoming habitual to him; I strove to teach him the government of himself, by referring not only every action, but every thought, to one high and holy principle of thinking and acting to God; and I strove to build up consistent habits on the foundation of holy principle. I was so anxious about my son that I did not dare to treat his faults with a foolish indulgence. I taught him to know that I could punish, and that I would be obeyed; yet he lived with me, I think, in all confidence of speech and action, and seemed never so happy as when he sat at my feet, and asked me, in the eagerness of his happy fancies, more questions than I could, in truth, answer.—I cannot go on speaking thus of those joyous times which are gone for ever—I will turn to a darker subject—to myself.—While I gave up my time, my thoughts, my soul's best energies to my child, I neglected myself, the improvement of my own heart and its dispositions. This may seem strange and improbable to some. It may be imagined that the habits of strict virtue which I taught to my son would, in the teaching, have been learnt by myself; and that, in the search after sound wisdom

for him, I must have turned up as it were many treasures needed by myself. It would be so in most instances perchance; it was not so in mine. The glory of God had not been my first wish when I prayed for a son. I had imposed upon myself in thinking that I acted in the education of my child upon that sacred principle. It was honour among men that I looked for. I had sought to make my son every thing that was excellent, but I had not sought to make *myself* fit for the work I undertook. My own natural faults had been suffered by me to grow almost unchecked, while I had been watchful over the heart of my child. Above all, the natural infirmity of my character—anger, violent outrageous anger, was at times the master, the tyrant of my soul. Too frequently had I corrected my child for the fault which he inherited from me; but how had I done so? when passionately angry myself, I had punished my boy for want of temper. Could it be expected that Maurice would profit by my instructions, when my example too often belied my words? But I will pass on at once to my guilt.

The Countess, my mother, had given to Maurice a beautiful Arabian horse. I loved to encourage the boy in all manly exercises. While a mere child he rode with a grace which I have seldom seen surpassed by the best horsemen. How nobly would he bear himself, as side by side on our fleet horses, we flew over the open country! Often, often do I behold in memory his clear sparkling eyes glancing with intelligence; his fair brow contracted with that slight and peculiar frown, which gives assurance that the mind shares in the smile of the lips. Often do I see before me the pure glow flooding over his cheek, the waves of bright hair floating away from his shoulders, as he galloped full in the face of the fine free wind.

My boy loved his Araby courser, as all noble-spirited boys love a favourite horse. He loved to dress, and to feed, and to caress the beautiful creature; and Selim knew his small gentle hand, and would arch his sleek and shining neck when the boy drew nigh, and turn his dark lustrous eye with a look like that of pleased recognition on him, when his master spoke.

My child was about eleven years old at the time I must now speak of. He usually passed many hours of the morning in the library with me. It was on the 17th of June, a lovely spring morning, Maurice had been very restless and inattentive to his books. The sunbeams dazzled his eyes, and the fresh wind fluttered among the pages before him. The boy removed his books, and sat down at a table far from the open window. I turned round an hour after from a volume which had abstracted all my thoughts. The weather was very hot, and the poor child had fallen fast asleep. He started up at once when I spoke. I asked him if he could say his lesson? He replied, "Yes," and brought the book instantly; but he scarcely knew a word, and he seemed careless, and even indifferent. I blamed him, and he replied petulantly. I had given back the book to him, when a servant entered, and told me that a

person was waiting my presence below. I desired the boy, somewhat with an angry tone, not to stir from the room till I returned, and then to let me hear him say his lesson perfectly. He promised to obey me.—There is a small closet opening from the library; the window of this closet overlooks the stable. Probably the dear child obeyed me in learning perfectly his lesson; but I was detained long; and he went to the closet in which I had allowed him to keep the books belonging to himself. A bow and arrows which I had lately given him were there; perhaps the boy could not resist looking on them; they were lying on the floor when I entered afterwards. From that closet Maurice heard the sound of a whip—he heard quick and brutal strokes falling heavily. Springing up, he ran to the window; beneath he saw one of the grooms beating, with savage cruelty, his beautiful and favourite little courser. The animal seemed almost maddened with the blows; and the child called out loudly to bid the man desist. At first the groom scarcely heeded him, and then smiling coldly at the indignant boy, told him that the beating was necessary, and that so young a gentleman could not understand how a horse should be managed. In vain did my child command the brutal fellow to stop. The man pretended not to hear him, and led the spirited creature farther away from beneath the window. Instantly the boy rushed from the room, and in a few moments was in the yard below. I entered the library shortly after my son had left it. The person who had detained me brought news which had much disconcerted, nay displeased me. I was in a very ill humour, when I returned to the room where I had left Maurice; I looked vainly for him, and was very angry to perceive that my request had been disobeyed; the closet door was open; I sought him there. While I wondered at his absence, I heard his voice loud in anger. For some moments I gazed from the window in silence. Beneath stood the boy, holding with one hand the reins of his courser, who trembled all over, his fine coat and slender legs reeking and streaming with sweat: in his other hand there was a horse-whip, with which the enraged boy was lashing the brutal groom. In a voice of loud anger, I called out. The child looked up; and the man who had before stood with his arms folded, and a smile of calm insolence on his face, now spoke with pretended mildness, more provoking to the child, but which then convinced me that Maurice was in fault. He spoke, but I silenced him, and commanded him to come up to me instantly. He came instantly, and stood before me yet panting with emotion, his face all flushed, and his eyes sparkling with passion. Again he would have spoken, but I would not hear. "Tell me, sir," I cried: "Answer me one question; are you right or wrong?" "Right," the boy replied proudly. He argued with me—my fury burst out.—Alas, I knew not what I did! but I snatched the whip from his hand—I raised the heavy handle,—I meant not to *strike where* I did. The blow fell with horrid force on his fair head. There was iron on the handle, and my child, my only son, dropt lifeless at

my feet. Ere he fell, I was deadly cold, and the murderous weapon had dropt away from my hand. Stiffened with horror, I stood over him speechless, and rooted awhile to the spot. At last the yells of my despair brought others to me—the wretched groom was the first who came.—I saw no more, but fell in a fit beside my lifeless child.

When I woke up to a sense of what passed around me, I saw the sweet countenance of my wife bent over me with an expression of most anxious tenderness. She was wiping away the tears from her eyes, and a faint smile broke into her face as she perceived my returning sense.

I caught hold of her arm with a strong grasp, and lifted up my head; but my eyes looked for the body of my child—it was not there. "Where is it?" I cried; "Where is the body of my murdered boy?" When I spoke the word "murdered," my wife shrieked—I was rushing out—she stopped me, and said, "He is not dead—he is alive." My heart melted within me, and tears rained from my eyes. My wife led me to the chamber where they had laid my child. He was alive, if such a state could be called life. Still his eyelids were closed; still his cheeks, even his lips, were of a ghastly whiteness; still his limbs were cold and motionless. They had undressed him, and my mother sate in silent grief beside his bed. When I came near, she uncovered his fair chest, and placed my hand over his heart; I felt a thick and languid beating there, but the pulse of his wrists and temples was scarcely perceptible. My mother spoke to me. "We have examined the poor child," she said, "but we find no wound, no bruise, no marks of violence. Whence is this dreadful stupor? No one can answer me." "I can answer you," I said; "no one can answer but myself. I am the murderer of the child. In my hellish rage I struck his blessed head."—I did not see the face of my wife, or my mother—as I spoke I hung my head; but I felt my wife's hand drop from me; I heard my mother's low heart-breaking groan. I looked up, and saw my wife. She stood before me like a marble figure, rather than a creature of life; yet her eyes were fixed on me, and her soul seemed to look out in their gaze.—"Oh my husband," she cried out at length, "I see plainly in your face what you suffer. Blessed God, have mercy, have mercy on him! he suffers more than we all. His punishment is greater than he can bear!" She flung her arms round my neck: she strove to press me nearer to her bosom; but I would have withdrawn myself from her embrace. "Oh, do not shame me thus," I cried: "remember, you *must* remember, that you are a mother." "I cannot forget that I am a wife, my husband," she replied, weeping. "No, no, I feel for you, and I must feel *with* you in every sorrow. How do I feel with you now, in this overwhelming affliction." My mother had fallen on her knees when I declared my guilt; my wife drew me towards her; and rising up, she looked me in the face. "Henry," she said, in a faint deep voice, "I have been praying for you, for

us all. My son, look not thus from me." As she was speaking the surgeon of my household, who had been absent when they first sent for him, entered the chamber. My kind mother turned from me, and went at once with him to the bedside of the child. I perceived her intention to prevent my encountering the surgeon. She should have concealed, at least for a while, her son's disgrace; but I felt my horrid guilt too deeply to care about shame. Yet I could not choose but groan within me, to perceive the good man's stare, his revolting shudder, while I described minutely the particulars of my conduct towards my poor boy. I stood beside him as he examined the head of my child. I saw him cut away the rich curls, and he pointed out to me a slight swelling beneath them; but in vain did he strive to recover the lifeless form; his efforts were, as those of my wife and mother had been, totally without success. For five days I sat by the bedside of my son, who remained, at first, still in that death-like stupor, but gradually a faint life-like animation stole over him; so gradually indeed, that he opened not his eyes till the evening of the fourth day, and even then he knew us not, and noticed nothing. Oh, few can imagine what my feelings were! How my first faint hopes lived, and died, and lived again, as the beating of his heart became more full and strong; as he first moved the small hand, which I held in mine, and at last stretched out his limbs. After he had unclosed his eyes, he breathed with the soft and regular respiration of a healthy person, and then slept for many hours. It was about noon on the fifth day that he awoke from that sleep. The sun had shone so full into the room, that I partly closed the shutters to shade his face. Some rays of sunshine pierced through the crevices of the shutter, and played upon the coverlid of his bed. My child's face was turned towards me, and I watched eagerly for the first gleam of expression there. He looked up, and then around him without moving his head. My heart grew sick within me, as I beheld the smile which played over his face. He perceived the dancing sunbeam, and put his fingers softly into the streak of light, and took them away, and smiled again. I spoke to him, and took his hand in my own; but he had lost all memory of me, and saw nothing in *my* face to make him *smile*. He looked down on my trembling hand, and played with my fingers; and when he saw the ring which I wore, he played with that, while the same idiot smile came back to his vacant countenance.

My mother now led me from the room. I no longer refused to go. I felt that it was fit that I should "commune with my own heart, and in my chamber, and be still."—They judged rightly in leaving me to perfect solitude. The calm of my misery was a change like happiness to me. A deadness of every faculty, of all thought and feeling, fell on me like repose.—When Jane came to me I had no thought to perceive her presence. She took my hands tenderly within hers, and sat down beside me on the floor. She lifted up my head from the boards, and supported it on her knees.

I believe she spoke to me many times without my replying. At last I heard her, and rose up at her entreaties. "You are ill, your hands are burning, my beloved," she said. "Go to bed, I beseech you. You need rest." I did as she told me. She thought I slept that night, but the lids seemed tightened and drawn back from my burning eyeballs. All the next day I lay in the same hot and motionless state, I cannot call it repose.

For days I did not rise. I allowed myself to sink under the weight of my despair. I began to give up every idea of exertion.

My mother, one morning, came to my chamber. She sat down by my bedside, and spoke to me. I did not, could not, care to notice her who spoke to me. My mother rose, and walked round to the other side of the bed, towards which my face was turned. There she stood and spoke again solemnly. "Henry," she said, "I command you to rise. Dare you to disobey your mother? No more of this unmanly weakness. I must not speak in vain, I have not needed to command before. My son, be yourself. Think of all the claims which this life has upon you; or rather, think of the first high claim of Heaven, and let that teach you to think of other duties, and to perform them! Search your own heart. Probe it deeply. Shrink not. Know your real situation in all its bearings. Changed as it is, face it like a man; and seek the strength of God to support you. I speak the plain truth to you. Your child is an idiot. You must answer to God for your crime. You will be execrated by mankind, for *your* hand struck the mind's life from him. These are harsh words, but you can bear them better than your own confused and agonizing thoughts. Rise up and meet your trial.—Tell me simply, that you obey me. I will believe you, for you never yet have broken your word to me." I replied immediately, rising up and saying, "I do promise to obey you. Within this hour I will meet you, determined to know my duties, and to perform them by the help of God." Oh! with what a look did my noble mother regard me, as I spoke. "God strengthen you, and bless you," she said; "I cannot now trust myself to say more." Her voice was feeble and trembling now, her lip quivered, and a bright flush spread over her thin pale cheek: she bent down over me and kissed my forehead, and then departed.

Within an hour from the time when my mother left me, I went forth from my chamber with a firm step, determined again to enter upon the performance of my long neglected duties. I had descended the last step of the grand staircase, when I heard a laugh in the hall beyond. I knew there was but one who could *then* laugh so wildly; and too well I knew the sound of the voice which broke out in tones of wild merriment ere the laugh ceased. For some moments my resolution forsook me. I caught hold of the ballustrade to support my trembling limbs, and repressed with a violent effort the groans which I felt bursting from my heart—I recovered myself, and walked into the hall. In the western oriel window, which is opposite the doors by which I entered, sat my

revered mother: she lifted up her face from the large volume which lay on her knees, as my step sounded near: she smiled upon me, and looked down again without speaking. I passed on, but stopped again to gaze on those who now met my sight. In the centre of the hall stood my wife, leaning her cheek on her hand. She gazed upon her son with a smile, but the tears all the while trickled down her face. Maurice was at her feet, the floor around him strewed over with playthings, the toys of his infancy, which he had for years thrown aside but had discovered that very morning, and he turned from one to the other as if he saw them for the first time, and looked upon them all as treasures. An expression of rapturous silliness played over the boy's features, but, alas! though nothing but a fearful childishness was on his face, all the child-like bloom and roundness of that face were gone. The boy now looked indeed older by many years. The smiles on his thin lips seemed to struggle vainly with languor and heaviness, his eyelids were half closed, his cheeks and lips colourless, his whole form wasted away. My wife came to me, and embraced me; but Maurice noticed me not for many minutes. He looked up at me then, and, rising from the ground, walked towards me. I dreaded that my mournful appearance would affright him, and I stood breathless with my fears. He surveyed me from head to foot, and came close to me, and looked up with pleased curiosity in my face, and then whistled as he walked back to his toys, whistled so loudly, that the shrill sound seemed to pierce through my brain.

August the 15th.

This day I have passed some hours with my poor boy. He is changed indeed. All his manliness of character is gone: he has become timid and feeble as a delicate girl. He shrinks from all exertion, he dislikes bodily exercise.—The weather was so delightful this morning that I took Maurice out into the park; he gazed round upon the sky, and the trees, and the grass, as if he had never looked upon them before. The boy wandered on with me beyond the boundaries of the park into the forest; he made me sit down with him on the bank of a narrow brook, and there he amused himself with plucking the little flowers that grew about in the grass, and throwing them into the water. As we sat there, I heard afar off the sounds of huntsmen; soon after a young stag came bounding over the hill before us, and crossed the stream within twenty yards of the spot where we sat. The whole heart of the boy would once have leapt within him to follow in the boldest daring of the chase; but now he lifted up his head, and stared at the stag with a look of vacant astonishment. The whole hunt, with the full rush and cry of its noisy sport, came near. Up sprung the boy all panting, and ghastly with terror. "Make haste, make haste," he cried out, as I rose; "take me away;" he threw his arms round me, and I felt the violent beating of his heart as he clung to me. I would have hurried him away; but as the dogs and the huntsmen came up close to us, the boy lost all power of moving. I felt him

hang heavily on me, and, raising his face from my shoulder, I saw that he had fainted. I took him in my arms, and carried him along the banks of the stream till we were far from all sight and sound of the chase; and then I laid him on the grass, and bathed his face and hands with water. He recovered slowly, and lay for some minutes leaning his head upon my bosom, and weeping quietly; his tears relieved him, and he fell asleep: I raised him again in my arms, and carried him still asleep to his chamber.

August the 19th.

My poor injured child loves me. I cannot tell why, but for the last few days he has seemed happier with me than with any other person. He will even leave his mother to follow me. I feel as if my life were bound up in him; and yet to look on him is to me a penance, at times almost too dreadful to be borne. How he did sit and smile to-day among the books, for whose knowledge his fine ardent mind once thirsted. They are nothing to him now—he had been before amusing himself by watching the swallows which were flying and twittering about the windows; when, taking up a book, I tried to read. Maurice left the window, and sat down on the low seat where he had been used to learn his lessons. He placed a book on the desk before him, and pretended to read; he looked up, and our eyes met. Again he bent his head over the volume: I had a faint hope that he was really reading; and, passing softly across the room, I looked over his shoulder. The pages were turned upside down before him, and he smiled on me with his new, his idiot smile; he smiled so long, that I almost felt as if he wished to give a meaning to his look, and mock the anguish which wrung my heart.

August the 20th.

I had ordered the Arabian horse to be turned out, and this morning I took Maurice to the meadow where Selim was grazing. The little courser raised up its head as we approached, and, recognising its master, came towards us. Maurice had not noticed the horse before, but then he retreated fearfully, walking backwards. The sagacious animal still advanced, and, turning quickly, the boy fled from him; but the sportive creature still followed, cantering swiftly after him.—Maurice shrieked loudly like a terrified girl. Groaning with the heaviness of my grief, I drove away the once favourite horse of my poor idiot boy.

Sunday, August the 30th.

I have just returned from divine service in the chapel attached to my house. While the chaplain was reading the psalms, Maurice walked softly down the aisle and entered my pew. He stood before me, with his eyes fixed on my face. Whenever I raised my eyes, I met that fixed but vacant gaze. My heart melted within me, and I felt tears rush into my eyes—his sweet but vacant look must often be present with me—it seemed to appeal to me, it seemed to ask for my prayers. Sinner as I am, I dared to think so.—It must be to all an affecting sight to see an idiot in the house

of God. It must be a rebuke to hardened hearts, to hearts too cold and careless to worship there, it must be a rebuke to know that one heart is not *unwilling*, but *unable* to pray. Bitterly I felt this as I looked upon my child. He stood before me a rebuke to all the coldness and carelessness which had ever mingled with my prayers. His vacant features seemed to say, "You have a mind whose powers are not confused—you have a heart to feel, to pray, to praise, and to bless God. The means of grace are daily given to you, the hopes of glory are daily visible to you." Oh! God, my child stood before me as a more awful rebuke, as a rebuke sent from Thee. Did not his vacant look say also, "Look upon the wreck which your dreadful passions have made? Think upon what *I was*? Think upon what *I am*?" With a broken heart I listened to the words of life; for while I listened, my poor idiot child leaned upon me, and seemed to listen too—When I bowed my head at the name of Jesus, the poor boy bowed his. They all knelt down; but just then, I was lost in the thoughtfulness of my despair: my son clasped my hand, and when I looked around I perceived that we alone were standing in the midst of the congregation. He looked me earnestly in the face, and kneeling down, he tried to pull me to kneel beside him. He seemed to invite me to pray for him; I did fall on my knees to pray for him, and for myself; and I rose up, hoping that for my Saviour's sake, my prayers were heard, and trusting that our Heavenly Father feedeth my helpless child with spiritual food that we know not of—

FROM THE LONDON MAGAZINE.

STANZAS

From the Italian of Lorenzo De Medici.

FOLLOW that fervour, O devoted Spirit!

With which thy Saviour's goodness fires thy breast;
Go where it draws,—and when it calls—Oh! hear it,
It is thy Shepherd's voice, and leads to rest.

In this thy new devotedness of feeling—

Suspicion, envy, anger, have no claim;
Sure Hope is highest happiness revealing,
With peace, and gentleness, and purest fame.

For, in thy holy and thy happy sadness,
If tears or sighs are sometimes sown by thee;
In the pure regions of immortal gladness
Sweet and eternal shall thine harvest be.

Leave them to say—"This people's meditation
Is vain and idle!"—sit with ear and eye
Fix'd upon CHRIST—in child-like dedication,
O thou inhabitant of Bethany.

FROM THE EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

SCOTTISH NOVELS OF THE SECOND CLASS.

"RINGAN GILHAIZE," "The Trials of Margaret Lindsay," and "Reginald Dalton," are the works we mean to notice under this title, which of right, however, belongs only to the last of them: for the first is inferior to the second, the second to the third, and it is only this last, which, as compared with the novels and tales from the inimitable pen of the author of Waverley, deserves to be described as really and truly of the second order of merit. "Ringan Gilhaize" is the work of a person who has written a great deal—to some purpose—and, among other things, "The Earthquake" and "Wheelie:" common report ascribes the "Trials of Margaret Lindsay" to a gentleman of more genius than observation, more enthusiasm than genius, and more extravagant sentimentalism than correct feeling or refined taste: the title-page of "Reginald Dalton" bears that it is by the author of "Valerius" and "Adam Blair," to both of which it is, in every point of view, incredibly superior.

"*Ringan Gilhaize.*" We have often thought that there was a considerable resemblance between the author of this novel and the driver of a stage-coach;—both condemned to trudge over and over again the same limited track,—both very much at home within their narrow range,—both profoundly ignorant of every thing beyond it, both grievously disposed to annoy passengers with long stories,—both vociferous laughers at their own jokes,—while in both, the humour and the vulgarity of the tales is also very much upon a parallel.

Mr. Galt, who, we believe, is now generally admitted to be the author, is not a man of an original or comprehensive mind; he possesses merely a limited talent in a particular department, and the department in which he does excel, is one for which, we must confess, we have no very great sympathy or admiration. In that particular walk, however, we are ready to admit that his merits are considerable. He is a close observer of the habits of the lower classes,—rather deep-read in "the humble annals of the poor,"—and certainly paints, with considerable force and humour, the details of the cottage, and the society of country villages. It is true, that, even in the list of these delineations, it was never difficult to point out a grossness of outline which bordered on caricature, and a glare of colouring which looked like daubing. The humour was frequently strained—depending upon circumstances either grossly improbable, or bearing on their face too obvious marks of laborious preparation; and the object of exaggeration applied, with still greater force, to the tone of feeling which characterized his attempts at the pathetic,—a tone which was, in general, singularly inconsistent with the defective intelligence and imperfect sensibility of the humble personages among whom the scene was laid. But still these defects were not material. In defence of the first, in-

deed, he might have alleged the high authority of Smollett, and the second was perhaps only an over-extension of that liberty of embellishment which, to a certain extent, must be conceded to the novelist in every case, and which, in this instance, was rendered excusable, if not necessary, by the prevalence of the very vulgarity which rendered the over-refinement of particular passages so striking and inconsistent. In spite of these blemishes, therefore, the public were disposed to be pleased with Mr. Galt's early productions. They enjoyed a laugh over the "Ayrshire Legatees," and they were grateful to the author who furnished the stimulus.

But to this ambitious personage the praise of success in one department was not enough. A sally into the regions of the sublime and beautiful was determined on, and accordingly "The Earthquake" appeared brimful of old-established horrors, after "the Italian method," and the first models of the Minerva Press. But by some unlucky fatality the public and Mr. Galt now seemed to misunderstand each other; for, though the author wrote with the gravity of a mute, and the pathos of a chief-mourner, his composition still excited as much risibility as before, though the ludicrous emotion was now excited by rather different means, and *directed to a different object*. This unlucky *contre-temps* seemed for a time to produce its proper effect. Mr. Galt quitted Sicily with a commendable expedition, and again took up his humbler quarters in Scotland. Still, however, he seemed to be haunted by some vague longings after the terrible; and in the midst of the vulgar absurdities of Sir Andrew Wylie, there was a visible attempt to copy the stern painting of Godwin,—though, unfortunately, it happened to exhibit the most complete ignorance of familiar occurrences, and well-known facts, as well as of the workings of passion, and the springs and motives of human action. This straining after effect—this attempt to take the feelings by storm, is also the prevailing feature of the present very dull performance; and, of course, those who are acquainted with Mr. Galt will easily anticipate the result. It is true, this attempt is not quite so outrageous as "The Earthquake." The personages of this novel do not turn "ashy pale," or "livid," so often as the camelion-like Castagnello, nor are they quite so terrific as Corneli and Don Birbone; but still it has rather more than enough of the faults of its predecessor, while, unfortunately, not a few must be added to the list, of which it enjoys a very unenviable monopoly.

In point of plot, the novels of this author have always been remarkably deficient, but the present is pre-eminently so. To say the truth, though we have called it a novel, we can see no pretensions which it has to the title. It is neither history nor novel, but combines, by some felicity of misconception, the defects of both—the flippancy of fiction without its interest, and the dulness of a chronicle without its veracity. To analyze the incidents would be out of the question; are they not all written in Kirkton and Wodrow? The work is a mere detail of historical facts, as Mr. G.

is pleased to term them, relative to the Covenanters, from the reign of the Regent Mary of Lorraine, down to the battle of Killierantie,—and a detail of the barest and most inartificial nature. To accomplish this, the author is obliged to have recourse to the expedient of detailing the separate adventures of the grandfather and father of his hero, with whose history they have no more connexion than with the administration of Prester John: and, what is odd enough, the adventures of the grandfather, which have no bearing whatever on the story of Ringan Gilhaize, constitute by far the most interesting portion of the book. He is placed among scenes which it would indeed be difficult to describe, without awakening some feelings of a pleasing nature. From the confidential situation which he holds in the house of the Earl of Glencairn, he is brought into contact with almost all the magnates of the time: the Queen-Regent, the unfortunate Mary, Darnley, Murray, and Knox, are introduced; but they are touched, in general, with a feeble and a trembling hand. As to the episode of Marion Ruet, (an unfortunate mistress of the Archbishop of St. Andrew's,) it appears to us to be conceived and executed in the worst taste. This part of the novel, however, really contains some spirited scenes; and had the book terminated here, we should not, perhaps, have had much to complain of. But then comes the father of the hero. Luckily his career is brief, and we recollect little of his movements, save that he died and was buried sometime about the Restoration of Charles II. Ringan Gilhaize is himself a Covenanter; he is engaged in most of the bloody scenes of that period; and latterly becomes a person of some importance among his own party. He is the representative of the suffering Covenanters, whose miseries it is the object of the book to describe; and it is to the incidents connected with his life, that the author seems to have devoted his greatest efforts, and in which he has most conspicuously failed.

The inartificial nature of the arrangement, however, which must be evident from this sketch of the materials of the story, is by no means the worst fault of "The Covenanters." It is liable to the stronger objection of an insufferable monotony. In fact, the influence of religious enthusiasm, though, in conjunction with other feelings, it may, no doubt, afford to the novelist occasional opportunities of striking display, does appear to us, when exhibited in an insulated shape, to be one of the most unmanageable and uninteresting principles which could well be selected *as the basis of a novel*. If the example of our Great Novelist led Mr. Galt to the adoption of the present subject, he should have paused a little to reflect, that, in the novels alluded to, it is used only as a contrast to other principles of a nature totally different; that the transition is from the banquet to the conventicle—from the careless chivalry of the Cavalier, to the stern endurance of the Covenanter; and that light and shadow are blended together throughout the whole in a harmonious variety. Here

there is no repose—no relief; all is deep-settled gloom, illuminated only, at times, by the “lightning of war.”

But not only has the author confined himself to the exhibition of but one class of feelings and incidents; these scenes and these feelings are unfortunately in themselves positively disagreeable, even disgusting. The scaffold, the stake, the prison—battle, rape, famine, fire, murder, and sudden death, are the staple of the book. The selection of such topics seems to us indicative of the coarsest notions with regard to the proper object of fictitious writing. It is not that such incidents are unfounded or unnatural. On the contrary, we contend that this very reality is the principal objection to their introduction. We may tolerate the horrors of the Greek tragedies, and those which Alfieri has founded on the same subjects, where they are represented, not as the natural consequences of human passions, but as the offspring of a blind and irresistible fatality. With us that idea is powerless. We know that the bloody banquet of Thyestes is over; that the innocent offences of *Œdipus*, the murderous quarrels of Polynices and Eteocles, and the long catalogue of the crimes which sully the annals of the Atridæ, are gone, never to return. But it is a very different case when these horrors are the result, not of a supernatural impulse, but of the evil passions of man; and when we reflect, that, in similar circumstances, similar atrocities may be repeated. These, we must always feel, are too real, too probable, to form the legitimate subject of fictitious narrative; and we shrink from them, as from the newspaper account of an execution. To take a case in point: What would Mr. Galt think of writing a novel on the present troubles in Ireland? Captain Rock is rather a superior ruffian in his way, and the abduction of Miss Goold a very dramatic incident; not to mention the opportunity of exhibiting his legal knowledge, which a trial at the Limerick Assizes would afford to one who had already displayed such an *intimate acquaintance* with the *law of the sister country*. But can any one believe that the thing would be tolerated for a moment? And yet, where is the difference in principle between the one case and the other? Will it be gravely maintained, that the lapse of a few years can render that pleasing, or even tolerable, in a novel, which every human being must feel at this moment to be fitted only for the dreary columns of the Newgate Calendar?

We are quite aware, that the usual answer to charges of this nature, on the part of the admirers of strong excitement, is, that such descriptions display great power; and this unmeaning phrase seems, by the initiated, to be regarded as a sufficient apology for any absurdity. Thus, if a clergyman commit a *faux pas*, and behave, first like a fool, and then like a madman, we are told the description is very powerful;—if a baronet commit murder for an offence given twenty years before, and then break his neck over a two-pair-of-stairs window, this is a powerful incident;—if a man, on coming up to his old friend's cottage, finds the owner staring him

in the face over a stile, all the while as dead as Hector,—still the answer is,—“Why, to be sure, all this is rather absurd; but then, Sir, consider the power.” Now, with all due consideration, we must confess we are as far as ever from perceiving in what the merit of such descriptions consists. If power means merely the capacity of producing a physical effect on the nerves, we can understand the grounds of the defence, and then the novelist would share his honours with the executioner and the anatomical dissector, both very powerful personages in the same line: but if, as we suppose is the case, it be meant to imply the power of vanquishing difficulties, or the possession of any uncommon talent on the part of the author, we protest entirely against the inference. We are convinced that Hercules’ vein is really more easily assumed than almost any other; and we recollect that Lord Byron (a competent judge, it will be admitted,) makes some such avowal in one of his letters to Bowles. Indeed, we have always understood that fustian was one of the cheapest of commodities; though some people wear their dresses with such an air, that a casual observer might not suspect the poverty of the materials. We regret the more that the author of the “Ayrshire Legatees” should have adopted this hackneyed trick, because we think he really possesses considerable powers of pathos. We assure him, that there was more *power* displayed in two or three short passages of his earlier works, than in all the raving of “The Covenanters;” and that we should thank him more for one scene of broad humour or quiet feeling, than for a revival of all the enormities that ever polluted the pages of Massinger or Shirley.

A word or two before parting, on the views which Mr. Galt’s work exhibits of the Covenanters. And here we must say, that if we had no other means of judging than what the work itself contains, we should almost be tempted to accuse the author of a design to libel the character of that respectable sect. Our readers will recollect the accusations of prejudice and injustice with which our Great Novelist was assailed, when, in his *Old Mortality*, he ventured to bring forward some of the ridiculous features of the Covenanters. We confess we never saw the justice of the charge. But be that as it may, we can conscientiously say, that we entertain a higher opinion of them, from the sketches of that *prejudiced assailant*, than from the elaborate picture of Mr. Galt, their avowed advocate and eulogist. In the former work, we perceived something of that talent and address which the Covenanters undoubtedly possessed, as well as courage,—some union of the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove, which unquestionably went far, in our opinion, to exalt the noble, and diminish the ludicrous features of their character. But, in the present, we see only a blind and sullen spirit of resistance, united to the narrowest prejudices, and an intellect that would have been barely sufficient for the sack of a hen-roost; we see this unfortunate sect concealing themselves from pursuit in woods and caves, and yet taking every

means to discover their retreat, by the loudest and most unguarded celebration of their religious rites. We trust we are not insensible to the nobleness of religious constancy; but we ask, if these people were so ambitious of the crown of martyrdom, why did they fly at all? If they did fly, why were they so perversely ingenious in rendering their flight ineffectual? To take another example or two from the conduct of the hero, who is, of course, the representative of the beau-ideal of the covenant: Ringan Gilhaize, after the death of his whole family, save one son, begins to feel reluctant to expose him to the perils of warfare and persecution. In this uncertainty he takes his Bible, and turns up the first text he can find; but not being pleased with its tenor, he tries his fortune a second and a third time. (By the way, this is represented as a common practice among his party.) He then submits the result of these *Sortes Evangelicæ* to Mr. Cargill, a clergyman, who actually approves of the experiment, and declares that Providence had manifested its intentions by this species of revelation. We really know not whether to admire most the good sense that dictated the expedient, the honesty that sanctioned it, or the amiable candour and modesty which could talk in the same breath of the superstitious doctrines and priestly impostures of the English Church.—“O miseras hominum mentes, o pectora cæca!” Nor is the hero less selfish than superstitious. Take, for instance, his escape from the jail of Irvine. This feat he accomplishes by working on the weakness of a kind and crazy jailor, who allows his wife to visit him in prison. Ringan changes clothes with his wife, and with that amiable regard for self which distinguishes his proceedings, shuffles off, leaving his wife and the unfortunate jailor to share the consequences between them. The Apostle Paul, in similar circumstances, treated *his* jailor differently, though he was under no such obligation to him, and though heaven itself had interposed by an earthquake for his deliverance.

Our Presbyterian friends are perhaps not yet aware of the full extent of their obligations to Ringan Gilhaize; we therefore hasten to inform them, that it is to the unparalleled intrepidity of this gentleman that the death of Claverhouse was owing. This is accomplished in the following manner: Mr. Gilhaize, who had been watching his movements during the battle, from the windows of Renrorie House, descends at last—takes up a strong position behind an old garden-wall, with a goose-pool in front—shoots at him three several times, and then walks off as usual, leaving his unlucky comrades, on whom the suspicion of the shot had fallen, to shift for themselves. But the whole passage is so characteristic, that we must take the liberty of extracting it. Ringan witnesses the defeat of Mackay:

I ran to and fro on the brow of the hill—and I stamp with my feet—and I beat my breast—and I rubbed my hands with the fury of despair—and I threw myself on the ground, and all the sufferings of which I have written returned upon me—and I started up—and I cried aloud the blasphemy of the fool, “There is no God!”

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But scarcely had the dreadful words escaped my profane lips, when I heard, as it were, thunders in the heavens, and the voice of an oracle crying in the ears of my soul, "The victory of this day is given into thy hands!" and strange wonder and awe fell upon me, and a mighty spirit entered into mine, and I felt as if I was in that moment clothed with the armour of divine might.

The garden in which I then stood was surrounded by a low wall. A small goose-pool lay on the outside, between which and the garden I perceived that Claverhouse would pass.

I prepared my flint, and examined my firelock, and I walked towards the top of the garden with a firm step. The ground was buoyant to my tread, and the vigour of youth was renewed in my aged limbs: I thought that those for whom I had so mourned walked before me—that they smiled and beckoned me to come on, and that a glorious light shone around me.

Claverhouse was coming forward—several officers were near him; but his men were still a little behind, and seemed inclined to go down the hill, and he chided at their reluctance. I rested my carbine on the garden-wall—I bent my knee, and knelt upon the ground—I aimed and fired, but when the smoke cleared away, I beheld the oppressor still proudly on his war-horse.

I loaded again—again I knelt—and again I rested my carbine upon the wall, and fired a second time, and was again disappointed.

Then I remembered that I had not implored the help of Heaven, and I prepared for the third time, and when all was ready, and Claverhouse was coming forward, I took off my bonnet, and kneeling with the gun in my hand, cried, "Lord, remember David and all his afflictions!"—and having so prayed, I took aim as I knelt, and Claverhouse, raising his arm in command, I fired. *In the same moment, I looked up, and there was a vision in the air, as if all the angels of brightness, and the martyrs in their vestments of glory, were assembled on the walls and battlements of Heaven, to witness the event—and I started up and cried, "I have delivered my native land." But in the same instant, I remembered to whom the glory was due, and falling on my knees, I raised my hand and bowed my head, as I said, "Not mine, O Lord, but thine is the victory!"*

When the smoke rolled away, I beheld Claverhouse in the arms of his officers sinking from his horse, and the blood flowing from a wound between his breast-plate and the armpit.

We have quoted this passage, both as a remarkable one in itself, and as a pretty correct specimen of the manner of the book. If our readers should wish to know more of the subject, they may perhaps be enabled to judge of its general good taste, by being told, that John Knox had received infirmity "by yird and stane, in an inheritance on high," and that feeding a Clergyman is described by the elegant paraphrases of "giein' a pick to ane o' God's great-corbies!"

We now bid adieu to Mr. Galt—and we care not for how long, while his extravagant and erring spirit thus wanders beyond its confine. Beyond the liberties of Irvine—"altriciis extra limen Apuliæ"—he is absolutely nothing; and, to say the truth, we have had enough of him, even in his most favourite mood. Of course Mr. Galt thinks differently, and, we have no doubt, is already deep in composition.

—"The time has been,
That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
And there an end;"

but now, it seems, authors neither live nor write the less on that account. If the tranquillity of the author's mind really make it necessary for him to inflict upon the town an annual novel—why, there is no help for it; but if we are allowed to have any voice in

the matter, we should sincerely advise some change, at least, in the style of his works; being fully persuaded, that, as matters stand, *any* change must be for the better.

The second of these works, "*The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay*," will not detain us long. It has undoubtedly many faults, and by no means coincides with our ideas of a good novel; but there are some points connected with it that make it difficult for us to think or speak of it with asperity. It wears throughout a colouring of amiable, though exaggerated feeling; it abounds with pleasing pictures of pastoral stillness and repose, and it contains some scenes "of well-painted passion" and genuine pathos. Neither are its faults by any means of that obtrusive and provoking kind, by which we have been annoyed in "*The Covenanters*." It is true, both authors seem to entertain pretty much the same views as to the absolute necessity of strong and painful emotion; and if the author of the "*Trials*" does not actually employ the assault and battery system of the Knight of the Covenant, he lays siege to our feelings in a way which we are not disposed to consider as altogether legitimate. In one point, at least, he is wiser than his predecessor—he seeks to produce his effect, "*non vi, sed sæpe cadendo*," not so much by the violence as by the repetition of the stroke; and thus, at all events, we are spared the revolting incidents which are essential in the system of the other.

We have hinted, that we do not admire the means by which the author aims at exciting the feelings. The whole secret consists in accumulating upon the heroine a multitude of disasters, and the result is, that it is actually a weariness of the flesh to get through them all. The tale describes the poverty and dependence of the infant life of Margaret Lyndsay—the laborious industry of her youth—the struggle with poverty, aggravated by the blindness of one sister and the idiocy of another—the domestic woes occasioned by the misconduct of a father—the blight of youthful love—the death of friends, falling thick as autumnal leaves—the miseries of an ill-assorted marriage, in short, a perfect tissue of misfortunes. If we are at any time favoured with a glimpse of comfort, it only serves to deepen the gloom that follows it; and the impression in closing the book, notwithstanding the author's certificate that his heroine was then perfectly happy, is of the most cheerless and uncomfortable nature. Now we confess, we have a great dislike to a monotony of misery. We like to look at the bright side of things; and however doubtful we may conceive the usual axiom of novel writers to be, "that virtue, even in this life, is its own reward," we hold, that he forgets his duty to society, who, by representing virtue and goodness as perpetually contending with and vanquished by distress and misfortune, virtually inculcates an opposite doctrine.

The conception of these distresses, too, we think, does little credit to the ingenuity of the author. There is something in the idea of death so deeply and universally interesting,—something

which appeals so irresistibly to the general mind, that, even in the hands of the worst writer, it is scarcely possible that the description of the death of a fellow creature should not, in some measure, excite our sympathy. But then, exactly in proportion to the certainty of its effects in all cases, must the merit of an author, who has recourse to this source of excitement, be diminished; for what any one can do, no one can claim any very great merit for performing. Now, this common-place trick occurs perpetually. It is, in fact, the origin of almost all the trials to which Margaret Lyndsay is exposed. The author cuts off his characters like a pestilence. The father and mother, the two sisters, the grand-uncle, one husband, and two lovers of Margaret Lyndsay, are added to the bills of mortality in the course of this work,—“besides women and children,” with whom the heroine happens to be rather disagreeably connected. All this, we confess, appears to us rather too much in the style of “the amusements of Muley Bugentuf;” and we regret that one, who is so capable of better things, should have descended to the use of so hackneyed an expedient.

But disapproving, as we do, of some of the principles on which this novel is constructed, we feel that there is a charm about the work to which we should be sorry to be insensible. There is such a spirit of tender feeling breathed over the whole,—it is so conversant with pure and gentle emotions,—it presents so many amiable views of the human heart, that we shut our eyes willingly to the occasional *Germanisms*, both of sentiment and expression, which a critical eye would easily detect in this sketch of Scottish manners. The heroine, Margaret Lyndsay, is a beautiful image of patient, enduring tenderness,—a Scottish Una, still upheld in all her distresses by the spirit of truth and religion. The old miser, Daniel Craig, is well drawn, and the little sketch of the dying enthusiast of Lamington Braes is beautifully touching.

On the whole, we take leave of the work with feelings of kindness towards the author. It reads as if it were the production of a refined and amiable mind. Its greatest beauty consists in its tenderness and delicacy, and its greatest drawback is a certain methodistical air, which occasionally suggests to us the ideas of an overgrown track—Leigh Richmond and the Dairyman's Daughter.

The last of these performances we are called upon to notice, at present, is “*Reginald Dalton*,” incomparably the best of the three, and exhibiting talents, if not genius, of a very superior kind. To those who have dozed over the sombre prozing of “*Valerius*,” or sickened at the gloating sensuality and cant of “*Adam Blair*,” the volumes before us may present themselves in a questionable shape,—and the unredeemed dulness of the one, and the disgust excited by the other, may conjure up prejudices likely, in some instances, at least, to deprive the author of his just meed of praise. But, in pronouncing an honest and impartial opinion, we must turn such intruders out of doors, and take care that we do not tra-

vel out of the record. Reginald Dalton is unquestionably a work of talent and merit, betraying acuteness and closeness of observation, written with spirit and vigour, and containing scenes, in point of dramatic effect, second only to some of the happiest and most successful in the works of the "Great Unknown" himself. With a few exceptions, the characters are brought out and developed with discrimination and success; the style is, upon the whole, correct, nervous, and rather severe; the catastrophe is evolved without much unnecessary trickery or perplexment; and the general tendency of the tale is, in our estimation, perfectly innocuous. The vicar of Lannwell is really a redeeming impersonation, and entitled to the greater praise; as his character, which is preserved in perfect keeping throughout, in almost no instance that we recollect of runs into that of his archetype the Vicar of Wakefield, but possesses a complete and undoubted identity; which shows that the author had a just conception of the difficulties he had to encounter in following Goldsmith, and talents equal to the task of surmounting them. We pity the person, if such there be, who does not feel a deep sympathy for the quiet, unobtrusive virtue, and strong paternal affection, for which this good man is distinguished; and who can resist the influence of the scene—certainly the most powerful in the work—where the father visits the son in prison after his duel with Chisney?

At the same time, we cannot help feeling that Ralph Macdonald is a little overstrained and artificial; but his penetration is so great, his mother-wit so strong, his acuteness so keen, and so seldom at fault, that the reader cannot choose but be surprised and pleased. The old priest is also a capital fellow in his way; while there is a purity, simplicity, and truth, combined with much of that passive heroism peculiar to the finer specimens of the female character, about Ellen Hesketh, which take hold of the imagination and the heart, and create a deep interest in her fortunes. The whole race of the Catalines belong to the well-known tribe whom Novelists, from time immemorial, have held in a species of helotism; they are mere pieces of machinery, introduced first for the perplexment, and ultimately for the benefit of the leading characters, to whose higher destiny, of course, they yield, after their schemes have been baffled, their arts exposed, and their devices turned against themselves. Sir Charles, however, is one of the most timid, squeamish, unenterprising ruffians we have ever met with; and the vassalage in which his secret marriage bound him to the crafty Macdonald, seems to stand in the author's way, and certainly impairs the energy of the character in the detail of the story.

But Chisney is by far the most finished portrait of the group, and is sketched with a bold, free, and powerful hand. His interviews with young Dalton, and the artifices he practises to upset his resolutions of sobriety and application, are admirably given: his wit also is keen, sarcastic, and abundant; and he wields that dangerous but envied weapon, with the reckless and unthinking

spirit, too common to those to whom nature has entrusted it. The Oxford Rows are likewise described so much *con amore*, and with the *quorum-magna-pars-fui* feeling, that this part of the work will hardly fail to be read with supreme delight on the other side of the Tweed, and by all who cherish pleasant recollections of those days of fun, frolic, and faggging, spent under the venerable shade of *Alma mater*.

The faults of this production, like its merits, are prominent. The reader is bored to death with Oxford and Oxonians, though, in his incessant eulogies, it is difficult to discover whether the author be serious or in jest; for, if his account of the system of University tuition, and the style of life pursued by all those students who have money in both pockets, be any thing near the truth, Oxford is precisely the last place in the universe where any parent would send his son to be *educated*. All the "calumnies against Oxford," which have been charged against the *Edinburgh Review*, were a joke to the picture drawn of that huge mass of over-fed pedantry and dulness exhibited in the volumes of Reginald Dalton. It is to be regretted, too, that in many places it betrays an asperity and bitterness of spirit, and a proneness to indulge in political vituperation, which, however they may be relished by the admirers of a certain periodical, are singularly misplaced in a work of this kind, and the more to be deplored, as they cannot but injure its popularity, and excite prejudices productive of no good to the author's reputation. These overflowings of gall, it is true, are, in general, exceedingly harmless; but they are not the less apparent on that account. We approach the tiger in his cage with perfect security; but we are not the less convinced of the innate ferocity of the animal in the crib: we trust not to him, but to the ribs of iron or steel with which he is restrained, and laugh at his growlings with composure and tranquillity. At the same time, we are aware that the author may plead great examples in his justification. If the Covenanters have been quietly held up to ridicule in a novel, there is no reason why the Whigs should fare better in a similar vehicle,—and the sooth to say, they have fewer claims to indulgence, as they are commonly ready enough to pay back the obligation with interest: but there is little harm in suggesting to the author before us, (to whose general merits we have borne a hearty and willing testimony,) that he did wrong in appropriating, without acknowledgment, a repartee ascribed to Mr. John Clerk, when addressing the highest law-officer in this United Kingdom, seeing he holds Whigs of all dimensions in such utter contempt and abhorrence,—at least if he may be taken at his word, which, after all, is not, perhaps, what he intends.

In the next place, the moral effect of Reginald Dalton, (which, upon the whole, is good,) would not have in any degree been impaired, had the author manifested less sympathy with tippling, guzzling, gormandizing, and certain other practices which may be endured in a wild youth at Oxford,—the proper place, according

to the author, for the display of such accomplishments in perfection,—but which it is almost discreditable in one of the *togati* of our Courts of Law to chronicle with such fulness of heart and superabundance of glee. We are far from saying that there is any thing very wrong in all this, or from meaning to describe the author as *de grege Epicuri porcum*; but we do say, that, in this temperate region, people are disposed to make but small allowances for such vivid ecstasies, and such warm recollections.

Nor, in the last place, would it have been amiss had the author more carefully avoided identifying himself with certain articles which have appeared elsewhere, and which, from the freedom with which not only their tone and spirit, but even their jokes and witticisms have been transferred to the pages of the work before us, we must now consider, upon the best evidence, as from the pen of the author of “Valerius” and “Adam Blair.” We are not of the number who view this *sub luce malignâ*: as a matter of vulgar, common-place prudence, it is more the affair of the author than any body else: he is entitled to bring into the light, or cast into the shade, whatever he pleases: but there *are* persons to whom Reginald Dalton would have afforded a more unmixed pleasure had it appeared in an individual and independent form, and been less (in many parts, at least,) the echo of compositions which have made few men wiser, and no man better. As it is, however, it would be absolute drivelling, or worse, to deny the author his just modicum of praise. His range is limited, but within his peculiar sphere he is admirable. His dialogue is smart and piquant; his conception of character clear and distinct; the tone of his narrative sprightly, careless, and sarcastic. He has an eye for the oddities, eccentricities, and infirmities, rather than for the amiable and virtuous qualities of men; but when he chooses, he can touch a higher string, as he has evinced in the prison-scene already alluded to, which is a master-piece of its kind,—and in several of the scenes where Ellen Hesketh figures in the fore-ground. It ought also to be mentioned, to his credit, that he seems to cherish an immeasurable contempt for that puling, sickening, sentimental cant, and those monstrosities of feeling and character, by means of which some of his contemporaries endeavour to produce effect, and to pass current as men of genius and “power.” In a word, Reginald Dalton is, without all question, the best of this author’s performances, and he, of all the tribe who have followed in the wake of the “Great Unknown,” approaches the nearest, in spirit, force, and originality, to his unrivalled model and prototype.

FROM THE LONDON LITERARY GAZETTE.

ROYAL SOCIETY.

On Monday, Dec. 1, (St. Andrew’s Day being on a Sunday) was held the Anniversary General Meeting of the Royal Society, for

the election of the Officers of the Society, and other stated purposes; when, the chair being taken by the President at twelve o'clock, and a numerous assembly of the Fellows being present, the business of the day was opened, as usual, by an address from the Chair, commemorating the most distinguished Members of that body who had died in the year now closed; and presenting Sir Godfrey Copley's Medal to the person chosen by the Council.

In this speech, which, like that delivered on a former occasion, struck every hearer, not only by its propriety, but also by its eloquence, Sir Humphrey Davy first regretted the loss which the Society had sustained, since the last Anniversary, in the deaths of Drs. Baillie, Hutton, Jenner, Col. Lambton, and some others of less celebrity.

On each of those persons the President bestowed an appropriate and discriminating eulogium, stating the peculiar merits by which they were entitled to the esteem and regret of the Society.

When this more melancholy part of his task was finished, the President announced Mr. Pond, the Astronomer Royal, as the person whom the Council had considered as most worthy to receive the Medal on the present occasion. In presenting it to him, he not only enlarged upon the peculiar merits of Mr. Pond, as a most enlightened and accurate Astronomer, but also entered into a general view of the services rendered to the science of Astronomy, by his illustrious predecessors Flamsteed, Halley, Bradley, and Maskelyne; to whose seat he justly pronounced Mr. Pond most worthy to succeed. The particular merit for which the Medal was now adjudged to this eminent person, he stated to be his laborious and most accurate observations, with a view to decide the long agitated question of the parallax of the fixed stars. He remarked, that Mr. Pond's observations were calculated to disprove the existence of such parallax, contrary to the opinion of Dr. Brinkley, of Dublin; that though the point cannot yet be esteemed by any means decided, it was brought somewhat nearer to a conclusion; awaiting, however, the ulterior remarks and observations of Astronomers who hold the contrary opinion. He noticed also Mr. Pond's discovery of the southern motion of the fixed stars. The President concluded, in a manner worthy of himself, by an eloquent and forcible intimation on the tendency of every correct advance in philosophy, to illustrate the wisdom and goodness of the Omnipotent Creator.

The Society met afterwards at their Anniversary Dinner, where several very excellent speeches were pronounced by the President, Mr. Peel, and other distinguished Fellows of the Society.

Blackwood's Exultation over the Liberal.

THE Liberal is dished. The Cockneys have proved themselves more intense idiots than knaves generally are, and are now dumb

in their impotence. There is much wickedness in and about London and elsewhere; a gross appetite for slander and indecency is craving and aching to be fed, and yet these caterers have been incapable of supplying garbage. All that was necessary for their work was a slight smattering of erroneous information, as much cleverness as belongs to a second rate-bagman, the liveliness of an under-waiter in a suburban tavern, the grace of a street-walker, not yet utterly battered, the philosophy of an itinerant lecturer on Reform, the eloquence of an unemployed barrister's clerk, the wit of an editor of the fiftieth Incarnation of Joe, the manners of a run-away London tailor's apprentice, and the morals of a retired bagnio-keeper, ruralizing beyond East-end—Yet in all these qualifications have they been found wanting; and unable to pick up a dishonest subsistence, they are now starving on unpaid small-beer, and parsnips taken on tick. It is a sad business, indeed, to be preyed upon by a longing desire for all sorts of low and dirty wickedness, and yet to find, although the spirit is willing, that the flesh is weak; to be hooted at in the impotent perpetration of despicable vice; to be ducked in the slough of despond by the base crew you have been trying to exasperate against an honest householder; to be put into the stocks by the very profligates to whom you have been offering cheap, irreligious and obscene tracts; to be hauled down from the barrel-head on which you have been playing your mountebank tricks before “the low earth,” and elevated to the pillory by the gang you have sickened at the picture of their own corruption; to be sent into solitary confinement, lest you should pollute the operation of the tread-mill; and finally, admitted, with a hesitating hand, to the rites of burial in the vaults of Pozzi, among the very scum and refuse and excrements of mortality.

We are decided enemies to every thing bordering upon exaggeration; so that the above will no doubt appear to many but a feeble sketch of the character and catastrophe of the Liberal.

FROM THE NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE OF COWPER.*

PERHAPS no poet of modern times excites a more perfect sympathy in the reader than Cowper—there is no one with whom we cherish, and desire to cherish, so purely personal a feeling. But this feeling, though created and called forth by means of his writings, does not point at them, or even seem to have any necessary connexion with or dependence upon them. It is not with *his writings*

* Private Correspondence of William Cowper, Esq. with several of his most intimate Friends. Now first published from the originals in the possession of his kinsman John Johnson, LL.D. rector of Yaxham with Welborne, in Norfolk. 2 vols. 8vo.

that we sympathise; so far from it, there are many portions of these which we peruse with pain, and turn away from not without indignation. And the parts which we do admire, and which unquestionably include a large proportion of the whole, do not lay hold of our affections, or fix themselves upon our memory, as those of many other poets do. We do not dwell and harp upon them, and repeat them to ourselves, and quote them to others, and dream of them, and recur to them in the midst of other things, without being able to avoid it. He has no passages that haunt us like a strain of music, and *will not* be got rid of. We are able to lay his poetry down, and take it up again, just as we please—to put it on and off, like a garment. But it is not so with our abstract notion of *the man*. In *him*, and in all that seems to concern him, we feel a personal interest: and after a time we read his writings, not so much for their own sake, as for his, and because we desire to know all his feelings, and the causes and consequences of them; we read them as a means, not as an end—as a means of reading *him*.

This was strikingly the case even before the publication of Hayley's *Life of the poet*. But when that took place, the feelings of personal regard which had before been called forth by Cowper's poetry, became increased to a pitch of almost painful interest by means of the letters which his biographer with a kind of unconscious judgment and good taste, substituted in the place of any other detail of the writer's life: for "*Hayley's Life of Cowper*" is luckily to be found no where but in the title-page of his volumes—the poet being permitted to tell his own story, so far as it suited the views of his friend to let that story appear. The letters to which we now refer, were, almost immediately on their appearance, allowed to take their station beside the most distinguished productions of any time or country, in the class to which they belong. And they in fact deserve that station; a very great proportion of them being models of the epistolary style, in point of ease, grace, and unaffected simplicity; and being, moreover, the pure effusions of as gentle and tender a heart as ever beat within a human bosom. But Cowper's letters, as they appeared in the publication alluded to, were calculated to engender other feelings than those of admiration towards themselves, and affectionate regard towards the writer of them. Previously to this time, certain parts of his poetry, which need not now be particularly referred to, had raised suspicions that something was at work in the writer's mind which ought not to have been there. There was occasionally a tone of feeling, and a turn of expression, which seemed to indicate, either that the writer's views on the subjects which he treated were unsettled and utterly at variance among themselves, or (what it was scarcely possible to believe) that they were not put forth to the world with that thorough good faith, without which one of their chief charms would have been wanting. Now, the letters published by Hayley in 1806 were pretty generally supposed to have explained this ap-

parent inconsistency. They discovered to us, in the poet of *The Task*, a being with natural qualities and dispositions, both of mind and body, calculated to render him blest in himself, and a delight and blessing to all around him—with an eye prone to discover all natural and moral beauty wherever it existed—a heart ever open to receive that beauty, and to leap with joy at the acquisition of it—and a mind gifted with the almost magical power of multiplying that beauty, and spreading it abroad upon all other minds and hearts within its reach. But in discovering to us these natural qualities and dispositions, they also discovered that, from some source or other, a fatal taint had found its way among them—a plague spot was every now and then visible, which, if it did not spread over and disfigure all, at least announced the presence of an influence which was likely to do so during every moment that it lasted. In plainer language, if it be needed, the letters of Cowper, as published by Mr. Hayley, discovered to us that, during the whole long period in which they, as well as his poetry, were written, the writer of them was labouring under an intellectual malady, complicated in its nature, and in its effects more fatal to the sufferer and more pitiable to the beholder than perhaps any other of the kind on record;—that in fact Cowper, at those periods when he was not actually in a state of mental darkness or aberration, was perpetually dreading the immediate approach of such a state, and was at the same time perpetually taking the very surest means of bringing that state upon him, by pampering the growth of certain religious views which had taken entire and exclusive possession of his active and susceptible, but somewhat timid imagination; and which views were utterly at variance with the perceptions of his quick and penetrating intellect, and the impulses and suggestions of his pure and gentle heart.

This is what the letters in question disclosed to the sympathising reader. But, if we remember them rightly, this is *all* that they disclosed;—thus leaving the matter still involved in a painful and perplexing mystery—leaving us still in doubt as to the relation between the innate and the external source of Cowper's malady, or whether the one had any necessary connexion with the other: in short, giving us no clue by which to find our way to the beginning of that malady, or to trace its progress;—but only permitting us to see a few of its wretched consequences, and to weep over its fatal end.

It is not our present intention to inquire minutely into the question, whether Hayley was justified in withholding from the world the clue above alluded to—supposing that he possessed it; or whether, on the other hand, those persons were so justified who afterwards, in 1815 and 1816, furnished the world with something of the kind, in the shape of a Posthumous memoir of Cowper's early life, written by his own hand. We conceive that these are matters with which the public have little or no concern. *They*, the public, may be perfectly justified in receiving and applying to their own pur-

poses, what the persons who supply them may have been imprudent or impolitic, or even grossly unjustifiable, in placing at their disposal. And on the other hand, we do not know that they have any right to complain of an editor who prefers *his* views, of letting them know no more than he wishes them to know, *to theirs*, of knowing all that is to be known. Certain it is, however, that, in the case more immediately before us, the public *are* anxious to know the real truth; and it is equally certain that they have not hitherto received the clue which will lead them to it. Whether that clue has not at last been placed in their hands, is a question which we shall not absolutely determine, except for ourselves—since it involves matter almost too delicate and at the same time too dangerous for a public journalist to handle; but we are greatly mistaken if the unprejudiced reader will find any difficulty in making the decision for himself, after he has perused some of the interesting and affecting matter to which we now call his particular attention.

The work before us consists of two additional volumes of the private letters of Cowper to his most intimate friends; and it is ushered into the world by a Preface explaining the views of the editor, Dr. J. Johnson, the poet's kinsman in putting it forth, and the sources from whence it has been obtained; and adding, what will perhaps be considered as unnecessary at least, the testimony of two of the editor's friends as to the merit and interest of the matter: though *we* can so easily excuse the said editor for printing the elegant eulogy of *one* of those friends, that we shall follow his example, and insert it here, as well in justification of what we may hereafter have to say in favour of the work, as to furnish the reader with an opinion which he may safely accept as worth more than any anonymous one that is likely to be offered to him.

"It is quite unnecessary to say that I perused the letters with great admiration and delight. I have always considered the letters of Mr. Cowper as the finest specimen of the epistolary style in our language; and *these* appear to me of a superior description to the former, as much beauty with more piety and pathos. To an air of inimitable ease and carelessness, they unite a high degree of correctness, such as could result only from the clearest intellect, combined with the most finished taste. I have scarcely found a single word which is capable of being exchanged for a better.

"Literary errors I can discern none. The selection of words and the structure of the periods are inimitable; they present as striking a contrast as can well be conceived, to the turgid verbosity which passes at present for fine writing, and which bears a great resemblance to the degeneracy which marks the style of Ammianus Marcellinus, as compared to that of Cicero or of Livy. A perpetual effort and struggle is made to supply the place of vigour, garish and dazzling colours are substituted for chaste ornament, and the hideous distortions of weakness for native strength. In my humble opinion, the study of Cowper's prose may, on this account, be as useful in forming the taste of young people as his poetry.—
Extract of a letter to the editor from the Rev. R. Hall, of Leicester.

With respect to the other parts of this explanatory preface, we learn from it, that, with the exception of one series, the letters now published had been previously submitted to Mr. Hayley, and by him rejected, as not suited to the views of *his* publication. Now this notification, which could not in candour be withheld by the

editor, but which he evidently puts forth with fear and trembling, as likely to cast a damp upon the interest of his work,—is precisely that in which *we* find its chief value to consist; and we fully anticipate that this will be the case with respect to many other readers besides ourselves—though certainly not to the majority. Those who have been accustomed to take a deep interest in the melancholy fate of Cowper, and who yet feel that they have not hitherto been able to penetrate into the real causes of that fate, will be likely to exclaim, on reading the passage which contains the above announcement:—"Now, then, we shall probably be able to 'pluck out the heart' of poor Cowper's mystery! It cannot be but that mystery is developed somewhere or other in the course of his private letters; for whatever his poems might be, his letters were evidently the effusions, not of his pen but his heart: and *here* are those which have been hitherto *suppressed* by the person whose object, perhaps whose duty, it was to give to the world nothing but what might prove creditable to the memory of the poet, and agreeable to his surviving friends. We shall surely find something *here*, then, which will prove to us that it was not in Cowper's own heart that were engendered those monstrous and degrading notions of God, and Man, and Nature, which shattered his intellect and blasted his peace; or, at all events, that if they were *engendered* there, it was not there that they found the foul materials on which they fed, and grew, and flourished!" We do not conceive that it falls within our province to determine, for the readers in question, whether they will find what they seek; especially as they are likely to be as well qualified as we are to make the decision for themselves on perusing the work. And in fact *without* perusing it, or at least all those various portions of it which bear upon the point, they would not be entitled to make any decision at all; and it does not consist with our plan to lay those passages before them. But we may, perhaps, be allowed to say to those readers, (addressing them, not as critics, but as individuals deeply interested like themselves in a question no less important as a moral inquiry than affecting as an instance of human suffering,) that we have searched the work before us in the spirit in which we have supposed that *they* will search it, and that, for ourselves, we *have* found what we sought! And we will add, that the discovery has given us more sincere, though not unmingled delight, than any thing else of the kind that we remember to have met with.

But we are perhaps treating of this work with too exclusive a reference to what are likely to be the views and feelings of a *few* readers respecting it. Passing over the remainder of the editor's Preface, therefore—which does not claim particular attention, either on account of its style or matter,—let us examine the work with a view to its general character, as a collection of letters from the pen of a favourite poet, and an amiable and accomplished man. We shall take a cursory glance at the general contents of the two volumes, omitting for the present all farther allusion to those parti-

cular portions of it to which we have referred in the beginning of this paper. But if our space will permit us, we shall probably again recur for a moment to that part of the subject.

The first volume commences with several short, but most agreeable letters to Mr. Joseph Hill, of the Temple; the only male friend, except Hayley, not decidedly devoted to religious pursuits, with whom Cowper kept up any connexion or correspondence after his retirement into the country. Some of these letters are delightful specimens of that easy gaiety of heart which, notwithstanding all the adventitious gloom with which it was so fatally blended, was, after all, the only *natural* turn of Cowper's disposition. There are many others throughout the volumes addressed to the same person, and of the same character. For the sake of variety, however, we shall extract as we go. Was there ever seen so graceful a mode of asking for a remittance, as the following short note presents?—

"By this time, I presume, you are returned to the precincts of the law. The latter end of October, I know, generally puts an end to your relaxations; such as reading upon sunshiny banks, and contemplating the clouds, as you lie upon your back.

"Permit it to be one of the *aliena negotia centum*, which are now beginning to buzz in your ears, to send me a twenty pound note by the first opportunity. I beg my affectionate respects to my friends in Cook's-Court."

Here is another equally short, and interesting from the literary opinions it includes. *One* of those opinions will sound a little startling to the admirers of Milton.

"I have been reading Gray's Works, and think him the only poet since Shakespeare entitled to the character of sublime. Perhaps you will remember that I once had a different opinion of him. I was prejudiced. He did not belong to our Thursday society, and was an Eton man, which lowered him prodigiously in our esteem. I once thought Swift's Letters the best that could be written; but I like Gray's better. His humour, or his wit, or whatever it is to be called, is never ill-natured or offensive, and yet, I think, equally poignant with the Dean's.

There is something very touching in the following reflections on Mr. Newton's quitting Olney; and they are expressed with a sweet simplicity:—

"You have observed, in common conversation, that the man who coughs the oftenest, (I mean if he has not a cold) does it because he has nothing to say. Even so it is in letter-writing: a long preface such as mine, is an ugly symptom, and always forbodes great sterility in the following pages.

"The vicarage-house became a melancholy object, as soon as Mr. Newton had left it; when you left it, it became more melancholy: now it is actually occupied by another family, even I cannot look at it without being shocked. As I walked in the garden this evening, I saw the smoke issue from the study chimney, and said to myself, That used to be a sign that Mr. Newton was there; but it is so no longer. The walls of the house know nothing of the change that has taken place; the bolt of the chamber door sounds just as it used to do; and when Mr. P—— goes upstairs, for aught I know, or ever shall know, the fall of his foot could hardly, perhaps, be distinguished from that of Mr. Newton. But Mr. Newton's foot will never be heard upon that staircase again. These reflections, and such as these, occurred to me upon the occasion; * * * * *. If I were in a condition to leave Olney too, I certainly would not stay in it. It is no attachment to the place that binds me here, but an unfitness for every other. I lived in it once, but now I am buried in it, and have no business with the world on the outside of my sepulchre; my appearance would startle them, and theirs would be shocking to me."

The first part of the following is admirably expressed. It seems to refer to a solicitation which he had received from his friend Mr.

Newton, to reply to some pamphlet which had just appeared on a religious controversy in which his friend was engaged. But we give the extract chiefly on account of the last passage, which is full of a wild pathos that is affecting in the highest degree.

"If I had strength of mind, I had not strength of body for the task which, you say, some would impose upon me. I cannot bear much thinking. The meshes of that fine net-work, the brain, are composed of such mere spinners' threads in me, that when a long thought finds its way into them, it buzzes, and twangs, and bustles about at such a rate as seems to threaten the whole texture.—No.—I must refer it again to you.

"My enigma will probably find you out, and you will find out my enigma, at some future time. I am not in a humour to transcribe it now. Indeed I wonder that a sportive thought should ever knock at the door of my intellects, and still more that it should gain admittance. It is as if harlequin should intrude himself into the gloomy chamber where a corpse is deposited in state. His antic gesticulations would be unseasonable at any rate, but more especially so if they should distort the features of the mournful attendants into laughter. But the mind long wearied with the sameness of a dull, dreary prospect, will gladly fix its eyes on any thing that may make a little variety in its contemplations, though it were but a kitten playing with her tail."

The following passages are exceedingly interesting: one on account of the insight it gives us into the use to which the poet applied his art; and the other, as explaining his own views on one of his principal works:—

"At this season of the year, and in this gloomy uncomfortable climate, it is no easy matter for the owner of a mind like mine, to divert it from sad subjects, and fix it upon such as may administer to its amusement. Poetry, above all things, is useful to me in this respect. While I am held in pursuit of pretty images, or a pretty way of expressing them, I forget every thing that is irksome, and, like a boy that plays truant, determine to avail myself of the present opportunity to be amused, and to put by the disagreeable recollection that I must, after all, go home and be whipt again."

"I send you *Table Talk*. It is a medley of many things, some that may be useful, and some that, for aught I know, may be very diverting. I am merry that I may decoy people into my company, and grave that they may be the better for it. Now and then I put on the garb of a philosopher, and take the opportunity that disguise procures me, to drop a word in favour of religion. In short, there is some froth, and here and there a bit of sweetmeat, which seems to entitle it justly to the name of a certain dish the ladies call a trifle. I did not choose to be more facetious, lest I should consult the taste of my readers at the expense of my own approbation; nor more serious than I have been, lest I should forfeit theirs. A poet in my circumstances has a difficult part to act: One minute obliged to bridle his humour, if he has any, and the next, to clap a spur to the sides of it: Now ready to weep from a sense of the importance of his subject, and on a sudden constrained to laugh, lest his gravity should be mistaken for dullness. If this be not violent exercise for the mind, I know not what is; and if any man doubt it, let him try. Whether all this management and contrivance be necessary, I do not know, but am inclined to suspect that if my Muse was to go forth clad in Quaker colour, without one bit of ribband to enliven her appearance, she might walk from one end of London to the other, as little noticed as if she were one of the sisterhood indeed."

Here is another passage similar to one of the preceding:—

"If a Board of Enquiry were to be established, at which poets were to undergo an examination respecting the motives that induced them to publish, and I were to be summoned to attend, that I might give an account of mine, I think I could truly say, what perhaps few poets could, that though I have no objection to lucrative consequences, if any such should follow, they are not my aim; much less is it my ambition to exhibit myself to the world as a genius. What then, says Mr. President, can possibly be your motive? I answer with a bow—Amusement. There

is nothing but this—no occupation within the compass of my small sphere, Poetry excepted—that can do much towards diverting that train of melancholy thoughts, which, when I am not thus employed, are for ever pouring themselves in upon me. And if I did not publish what I write, I could not interest myself sufficiently in my own success, to make an amusement of it."

We have hinted that Cowper's natural disposition was of a joyous character. It was so to a pitch of boyishness. He was, in fact, as pure and innocent as a child, and *might have been* as happy—sporting away his pleasant hours like a bird. How he delighted to make little riddles, and send them to his friends, and listen to their wrong solutions of them, and then send them the right! We have several instances of this in these volumes, and most affecting ones they are, occurring as they do in the midst of a gloom deep and deadly as that of the grave! Here follows one. He had sent his friend a cucumber, telling him that it was one "of my raising, but not raised by me."

"It is worth while to send *you* a riddle, you make such a variety of guesses, and turn and tumble it about with such an industrious curiosity. The solution of that in question is—let me see; it requires some consideration to explain it, even though I made it. I raised the seed that produced the plant that produced the fruit, that produced the seed that produced the fruit I sent you. This latter seed I gave to the gardener of Turningham, who brought me the cucumber you mention. Thus you see I raised it—that is to say, I raised it virtually by having raised its progenitor; and yet I did not raise it, because the identical seed from which it grew was raised at a distance. You observe I did not speak rashly, when I spoke of it as dark enough to pose an *Œdipus*; and have no need to call your own sagacity in question for falling short of the discovery."

We extract the following short passage for the purpose of pointing out the singular mixture which it presents, even within the same paragraph, of the adventitious, or perhaps we should say, the *habitudinal*, and the natural. The change from the one to the other, at the last clause, is striking.

"Though much obliged to you for the favour of your last, and ready enough to acknowledge the debt, the present, however, is not a day in which I should have chosen to pay it. A dejection of mind, which perhaps may be removed by to-morrow, rather disqualifies me for writing,—a business I would always perform in good spirits, because melancholy is catching, especially where there is much sympathy to assist the contagion. But certain poultry, which I understand are about to pay their respects to you, have advertised for an agreeable companion, and I find myself obliged to embrace the opportunity of going to town with them in that capacity."

The following is very pleasant and natural, and the style of it is the perfection of easy simplicity. The occasion was that of having just converted a little summer-house in his garden into a writing-room.

"It is an observation that naturally occurs upon the occasion, and which many other occasions furnish an opportunity to make, that people long for what they have not, and overlook the good in their possession. This is so true in the present instance, that for years past I should have thought myself happy to enjoy a retirement even less flattering to my natural taste than this in which I am now writing; and have often looked wistfully at a snug cottage, which, on account of its situation at a distance from noise and disagreeable objects, seemed to promise me all I could wish or expect, so far as happiness may be said to be local; never once advertent to this comfortable nook, which affords me all that could be found in the most sequestered hermitage, with the advantage of having all those accommodations near

at hand which no hermitage could possibly afford me. People imagine they should be happy in circumstances which they would find insupportably burdensome in less than a week. A man that has been clothed in fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, envies the peasant under a thatched hovel; who, in return, envies him as much his palace and his pleasure-ground. Could they change situations, the fine gentleman would find his ceilings were too low, and that his casements admitted too much wind; that he had no cellar for his wine, and no wine to put in his cellar. These, with a thousand other mortifying deficiencies, would shatter his romantic project into innumerable fragments in a moment. The clown, at the same time, would find the accession of so much unwieldy treasure an incumbrance quite incompatible with an hour's ease. His choice would be puzzled by variety. He would drink to excess, because he would foresee no end to his abundance; and he would eat himself sick for the same reason. He would have no idea of any other happiness than sensual gratification; would make himself a beast, and die of his good fortune. The rich gentleman had, perhaps, or might have had, if he pleased, at the shortest notice, just such a recess as this; but if he had it, he overlooked it, or, if he had it not, forgot that he might command it whenever he would. The rustic, too, was actually in possession of some blessings, which he was a fool to relinquish, but which he could neither see nor feel, because he had the daily and constant use of them; such as good health, bodily strength, a head and a heart that never ached, and temperance, to the practice of which he was bound by necessity, that humanly speaking, was a pledge and a security for the continuance of them all.

"Thus I have sent you a schoolboy's theme."

The following is another singular compound of gloom and humour. It would be worth extracting, if it were only for the capital simile about the riot-act.

"I do not at all doubt the truth of what you say, when you complain of that crowd of trifling thoughts that pesters you without ceasing; but then you always have a serious thought standing at the door of your imagination, like a justice of peace with the riot-act in his hand, ready to read it, and disperse the mob. Here lies the difference between you and me. My thoughts are clad in a sober liverr, for the most part as grave as that of a bishop's servants. They turn too upon spiritual subjects, but the tallest fellow and the loudest amongst them all, is he who is continually crying with a loud voice, *Actum est de te, peritui*. You wish for more attention, I for less. Dissipation itself would be welcome to me, so it were not a vicious one; but however earnestly invited, it is coy, and keeps at a distance. Yet with all this distressing gloom upon my mind, I experience, as you do, the slipperiness of the present hour, and the rapidity with which time escapes me. Every thing around us, and every thing that befalls us, constitutes a variety, which, whether agreeable or otherwise, has still a thievish propensity, and steals from us days, months, and years, with such unparalleled address, that even while we say they are here, they are gone. From infancy to manhood is rather a tedious period, chiefly, I suppose, because at that time we act under the control of others, and are not suffered to have a will of our own. But thence downward into the vale of years, is such a declivity, that we have just an opportunity to reflect upon the steepness of it, and then find ourselves at the bottom."

The passage which follows we should willingly have passed over, if we could have persuaded ourselves that it really belonged to Cowper. We can only trust ourselves to say that it is addressed to the Rev. Mr. Newton, the poet's friend and religious Mentor—a person who not long afterwards "improved the occasion" of Handel's celebrated Commemoration, by preaching a sermon on the profanation of that ceremony!

"He seems, together with others of our acquaintance, to have suffered considerably in his spiritual character by his attachment to music. The lawfulness of it, when used with moderation, and in its proper place, is unquestionable; but I believe that wine itself, though a man be guilty of habitual intoxication, does not more

debauch and befool the natural understanding, than music, always music, music in season and out of season, weakens and destroys the spiritual discernment. If it is not used with an unfeigned reference to the worship of God, and with a design to assist the soul in the performance of it, which cannot be the case when it is the only occupation, it degenerates into a sensual delight, and becomes a most powerful advocate for the admission of other pleasures, grosser perhaps in degree, but in their kind the same."

We meet with several passages in these volumes in which Cowper roundly asserts that all the light and humorous passages in his poetry are mere tricks—invented purely to inveigle the reader into listening to something more serious and useful. To this, as before, we shall only venture to say, that the passages in question occur in letters addressed to Mr. Newton. Here are two of them:—

"Be that as it may, it is quite sufficient that I have played the antic myself for their diversion; and that, in a state of dejection such as they are absolute strangers to, I have sometimes put on an air of cheerfulness and vivacity, to which I myself am in reality a stranger, for the sake of winning their attention to more useful matter."

"By the way—will it not be proper, as you have taken some notice of the modish dress I wear in *Table Talk*, to include *Conversation* in the same description, which is (the first half of it, at least,) the most airy of the two? They will otherwise think, perhaps, that the observation might as well have been spared entirely; though I should have been sorry if it had, for when I am jocular I do violence to myself, and am therefore pleased with your telling them, in a civil way, that I play the fool to amuse them, not because I am one myself, but because I have a foolish world to deal with."

The following is as agreeable a specimen as we ever recollect to have met with of the intentional "*parturiunt montes*," &c.

"This afternoon the maid opened the parlour-door, and told us there was a lady in the kitchen. We desired she might be introduced, and prepared for the reception of Mrs. Jones. But it proved to be a lady unknown to us, and not Mrs. Jones. She walked directly up to Mrs. Unwin, and never drew back till their noses were almost in contact. It seemed as if she meant to salute her. An uncommon degree of familiarity, accompanied with an air of most extraordinary gravity, made me think her a little crazy. I was alarmed, and so was Mrs. Unwin. She had a bundle in her hand—a silk handkerchief tied up at the four corners. When I found she was not mad, I took her for a smuggler, and made no doubt but she had brought samples of contraband goods. But our surprise, considering the lady's appearance and deportment, was tenfold what it had been, when we found that it was Mary Philips's daughter, who had brought us a few apples by way of a specimen of a quantity she had for sale."

The letters addressed to Mr. Newton may be searched long enough before we shall find in them such a passage as the following. Poor Cowper, with all his tenderness of heart, never forgot what was due to that gentleman—or rather what was expected by him. The passage is part of a letter to his old friend Mr. Hill, and refers to some one whom he has introduced to Cowper.

"I have seen him but for half an hour, yet, without boasting of much discernment, I see that he is polite, easy, cheerful, and sensible. An old man thus qualified, cannot fail to charm the lady in question. As to his religion, I leave it—I am neither his bishop nor his confessor. A man of his character, and recommended by you, would be welcome here, were he a Gentoo, or a Mahometan."

We cannot resist the temptation of contrasting this with another passage of a very different character. Cowper has been describing the brilliant career of a man of family and fortune, who, after

passing his youth abroad in folly and extravagance, returns, and "again makes a splendid figure at home—shines in the senate—governs his country as its minister—is admired for his abilities—and, if successful, adored, at least by a party;" and this imaginary person he contrasts with one of the poor but pious cottagers at Olney. He adds—"Who would suspect, that has not a spiritual eye to discern it, that the fine gentleman *was one whom his Maker had in abhorrence*, and the wretch last mentioned dear to him as the apple of his eye?"—(Vol. i. 23*d*.)—Who, indeed!—We need not say to whom *this* is addressed.

Having already found that our limits will not permit us to say all that we wish to say, on the painful part of our subject to which this last extract belongs, we had abandoned our intention of making any farther allusions to it on the present occasion. But the above passages, written within a very short period of each other, offered, to our thinking, so striking an illustration of the real state of the case, that we could not refuse to pick them up in passing, and lay them before the reader, who may draw what inference from them he pleases. Or, for all, however, we entirely acquit Mr. Hayley of all blame in suppressing such passages as the last that we have given; for they are no more to be attributed to his amiable and gentle-hearted friend, than the foul and blasphemous ravings of the youthful priestess of some Indian idolatry are to be considered as proceeding from the gentle form through which they do but pass. Neither do we, on the other hand, attach any thing like censure to the gentleman who has now given these passages, and a variety of similar ones, to the world. Whatever may have been his motive for so doing, (and we cannot conceive it to have been other than a justifiable one, as it respects himself and his deceased relative,) we, the Public,—who desire to know *all* that can be known about every one of whom we are interested in knowing *any thing*,—are obviously indebted to him: though we cannot but suspect that he little anticipated the use to which the information he has furnished us with is capable of being applied.

But pass we on to the more agreeable part of our task. Nothing can be more picturesque than the first portion of the following extract, nor more amiably easy than the second.

"At seven o'clock this evening, being the seventh of December, I imagine I see you in your box at the coffee-house. No doubt the waiter, as ingenious and adroit as his predecessors were before him, raises the tea-pot to the ceiling with his right hand, while in his left the tea-cup descending almost to the floor, receives a limpid stream; limpid in its descent, but no sooner has it reached its destination, than frothing and foaming to the view, it becomes a roaring syllabub. This is the nineteenth winter since I saw you in this situation; and if nineteen more pass over me before I die, I shall still remember a circumstance we have often laughed at.

"How different is the complexion of your evenings and mine! yours, spent amid the ceaseless hum that proceeds from the inside of fifty noisy and busy periwigs; mine, by a domestic fire-side, in a retreat as silent as retirement can make it; where no noise is heard but what we make for our own amusement. For instance, here are two rustics, and your humble servant in company. One of the ladies has been playing on the harpsichord, while I, with the other, have been playing at battle-dore and shuttlecock. A little dog, in the mean time, howling under the chair of

the former, performed, in the vocal way, to admiration. This entertainment over, I began my letter, and having nothing more important to communicate, have given you an account of it. I know you love dearly to be idle, when you can find an opportunity to be so; but as such opportunities are rare with you, I thought it possible that a short description of the idleness I enjoy might give you pleasure. The happiness we cannot call our own, we yet seem to possess, while we sympathize with our friends who can."

We hold this to be the perfection of letter-writing. What follows is equally good in its way. It is, in fact, one of the best specimens of cool, contemptuous irony that we are any where acquainted with.

"I give you joy of the restoration of that sincere and firm friendship between the Kings of England and France, that has been so long interrupted. It is a great pity, when hearts so cordially united are divided by trifles. Thirteen pitiful colonies, which the King of England chose to keep, and the King of France to obtain, if he could, have disturbed that harmony which would else, no doubt, have subsisted between those illustrious personages to this moment. If the King of France, whose greatness of mind is only equalled by that of his Queen, had regarded them, unworthy of his notice as they were, with an eye of suitable indifference; or, had he thought it a matter deserving in any degree his princely attention, that they were, in reality, the property of his good friend the King of England; or, had the latter been less obstinately determined to hold fast his interest in them, and could he, with that civility and politeness in which monarchs are expected to excel, have entreated his Majesty of France to accept a bagatelle, for which he seemed to have conceived so strong a predilection, all this mischief had been prevented. But monarchs, alas! crowned and sceptered as they are, are yet but men; they fall out, and are reconciled, just like the meanest of their subjects. I cannot, however, sufficiently admire the moderation and magnanimity of the King of England. His dear friend on the other side of the Channel, has not indeed taken actual possession of the colonies in question, but he has effectually wrested them out of the hands of their original owner, who, nevertheless, letting fall the extinguisher of patience upon the flame of his resentment, and glowing with no other flame than that of the sincerest affection, embraces the King of France again, gives him Senegal and Goree in Africa, gives him the islands he had taken from him in the West, gives him his conquered territories in the East, gives him a fishery upon the banks of Newfoundland; and, as if all this were too little, merely because he knows that Louis has a partiality for the King of Spain, gives to the latter an island in the Mediterranean, which thousands of English had purchased with their lives; and, in America, all that he wanted, at least all that he could ask. No doubt there will be great cordiality between this royal trio for the future; and though wars may perhaps be kindled between their posterity, some ages hence, the present generation shall never be witnesses of such a calamity again. I expect soon to hear that the Queen of France, who, just before this rupture happened, made the Queen of England a present of a watch, has, in acknowledgment of all these acts of kindness, sent her also a seal wherewith to ratify the treaty. Surely she can do no less."

Here is an exceedingly droll description, written in Cowper's own genuine and exquisitely humorous manner:—

"He had stolen some iron-work, the property of Griggs, the butcher. Being convicted, he was ordered to be whipt; which operation he underwent at the cart's tail, from the stone-house to the high arch, and back again. He seemed to shew great fortitude, but it was all an imposition upon the public. The beadle, who performed it, had filled his left hand with red ochre, through which, after every stroke, he drew the lash of his whip, leaving the appearance of a wound upon the skin, but in reality not hurting him at all. This being perceived by Mr. Constable H——, who followed the beadle, he applied his cane, without any such management or precaution, to the shoulders of the too merciful executioner. The scene immediately became more interesting. The beadle could by no means be prevailed upon to strike hard, which provoked the constable to strike harder; and this double flogging continued, till a lass of Silver-end, pitying the pitiful beadle

thus suffering under the hands of the pitiless constable, joined the procession, and placing herself immediately behind the latter, seized him by his capillary club, and pulling him backwards by the same, slapt his face with a most Amazonian fury. This concatenation of events has taken up more of my paper than I intended it should; but I could not forbear to inform you how the beadle threshed the thief, the constable the beadle, and the lady the constable, and how the thief was the only person concerned who suffered nothing."

We shall conclude our extracts from the first volume, with a charmingly light and lively passage, on the manner in which time escapes from us in these short postdiluvian days:—

"It is wonderful how, by means of such real or seeming necessities, my time is stolen away. I have just time to observe that time is short; and, by the time I have made the observation, time is gone. I have wondered in former days at the patience of the antediluvian world; that they could endure a life almost millenary, with so little variety as seems to have fallen to their share. It is probable that they had much fewer employments than we. Their affairs lay in a narrower compass; their libraries were indifferently furnished; philosophical researches were carried on with much less industry and acuteness of penetration, and fiddles, perhaps, were not even invented. How then could seven or eight hundred years of life be supportable? I have asked this question formerly, and been at a loss to resolve it; but I think I can answer it now. I will suppose myself born a thousand years before Noah was born or thought of. I rise with the sun; I worship; I prepare my breakfast; I swallow a bucket of goats'-milk, and a dozen good sizeable cakes. I fasten a new string to my bow; and my youngest boy, a lad of about thirty years of age, having played with my arrows till he has stript off all the feathers, I find myself obliged to repair them. The morning is thus spent in preparing for the chase, and it is become necessary that I should dine. I dig up my roots; I wash them; I boil them; I find them not done enough, I boil them again; my wife is angry; we dispute; we settle the point; but in the mean time the fire goes out, and must be kindled again. All this is very amusing. I hunt; I bring home the prey; with the skin of it I mend an old coat, or I make a new one. By this time the day is far spent; I feel myself fatigued, and retire to rest. Thus, what with tilling the ground, and eating the fruit of it, hunting and walking, and running, and mending old clothes, and sleeping and rising again, I can suppose an inhabitant of the primal world so much occupied as to sigh over the shortness of life, and to find, at the end of many centuries, that they had all slipt through his fingers, and were passed away like a shadow. What wonder then that I, who live in a day of so much greater refinement, when there is so much more to be wanted, and wished, and to be enjoyed, should feel myself now and then pinched in point of opportunity, and at some loss for leisure to fill four sides of a sheet like this? Thus, however, it is; and if the ancient gentlemen to whom I have referred, and their complaints of the disproportion of time to the occasions they had for it, will not serve me as an excuse, I must even plead guilty, and confess that I am often in haste, when I have no good reason for being so.

It seems almost superfluous for us to say, that a work, from which such extracts as these four last can be culled in the space of a few pages, recommends itself to general attention, as a source of the most agreeable amusement.

The second volume of these letters is not so light and miscellaneous in its character as the first; but to many readers it will prove even more deeply interesting, on account of its admitting us more fully into the melancholy places of Cowper's mind. Leaving the reader, however, to make this part of the investigation for himself, we can only afford space for a slight reference to that portion of the present collection which has now, for the first time, been submitted to the selecting hand of editorship. These are the series of letters addressed to Mrs. King, the wife of Dr. King, Rector of

Kimbolton; and we may safely pronounce them to be, generally speaking, and in proportion to their extent, of equal value and interest with any of the writer's that have hitherto been submitted to public notice. It seems that the lady, on the appearance of Cowper's poems, had commenced a correspondence with him, on the score of an ancient intimacy with his brother. This led to an interchange of civilities, which ended in a strict and intimate friendship; and the letters now published as part of this work, are a selection from the results of that intimacy. These letters are for the most part of a light, lively, and cheerful description; containing reminiscences of the happy part of the poet's past life, notices of the progress of his works, sketches of the manner in which he spends his time, &c. &c. And all this nearly unmingled with any melancholy or despondence; and the whole written with that delightful ease of manner, and graceful propriety of expression, in which Cowper has never been surpassed. In fact, to those readers who search these volumes for mere amusement, the portion of it to which we are now referring will form its chief attraction; and the rather, that, as we before hinted, it has never passed through any *selecting* hands. Our limits preclude us from giving any farther extracts; but we refer the general reader to the following letters, as especially proving what we have now stated: the letter at page 117, giving a rapid sketch of the writer's past life; that at page 150, where he draws an imaginary portrait of his correspondent, whom he has not yet seen; the charming one at page 162, where he describes to her his mode of passing his time before he took to writing poetry; and one at page 218, where he describes his manner of writing his translation of Homer, out in the fields, on scraps of *her* letters. In short, the whole of these letters to Mrs. King are the most valuable addition to Cowper's general correspondence;—of this new portion of which we now take leave, by sincerely thanking, on more accounts than one, the relative through whose intervention we owe the public appearance of it.

FROM THE NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

Collection des Mémoires Historiques des Dames Françaises.
26 vols. 18mo. (*A Collection of Historical Memoirs of French Ladies.*)

THIS may be called the golden age of memoirs, for at present there seems to be an insatiable rage for this species of productions, be they new or old, by male or female writers. The collection now before us has been published by subscription, and in *livraisons*; the last of which having just appeared, gives us an opportunity of throwing a general, and consequently hurried view, over the interesting contents of these volumes. And first in chronological order, we find "*Les Memoires de Madame de Motteville.*"

This lady was the favourite of Anne of Austria, to whom she remained steadfastly attached, notwithstanding her royal mistress was deprived of all power and influence by the fearless and irresistible machinations of an imperious minister. Madame de Motteville has recorded with a scrupulous fidelity, too often descending into trifling minutiae, all that took place at court during the minority of Louis XIV. Though her style is not remarkable either for elegance or correctness, yet we are willing to pardon this blemish, in consideration of the natural and sincere manner in which events are recounted—of the curious anecdotes thickly strewn in the course of the narrative—and of the pleasure we derive from seeing kings, queens, ministers, and other historical personages, stripped of their dazzling drapery, and discovered in the carelessness of *deshabille*, and the unimposing *nonchalance* of the closet.—We next come to the Memoires of Mademoiselle de Montpensier.—The narrative of this irritable, haughty, and impetuous princess of the royal blood, cannot be so safely relied on as that of the humbler Mad. de Motteville, as from her character and station she must necessarily have viewed many of the events she records and endeavours to account for, through the medium of her passions and prejudices. This disdainful beauty, called by Madame de Sevigne La Grande Demoiselle, after having refused the proffered hands of monarchs, became attached to the Count de Lauzun, to marry whom Louis XIV. at first gave her his consent, but shortly afterwards retracted it. It is, however, almost certain that they were afterwards married privately. It was in allusion to this projected marriage, that Madame de Sevigne wrote her famous *guessing* letter. This disappointment, added to other causes of chagrin, acting upon a naturally irritable and haughty mind, produced a bitterness of spirit, the traces of which are very evident in these memoirs. However, their historical value is not unimportant, as they treat of various public events of which the princess was a close observer, and in some of which she took a part. Besides, the style is much more correct and animated, though not so natural as that of Madame de Motteville, and has even been honoured by the eulogy of Voltaire.—We are next presented with the “Memoires de la Duchesse de Nemours.” These chiefly relate to the troublous times of the *Fronde*; in which unsuccessful attempt at revolution the ludicrous and the serious were so commingled, that if Heraclitus and Democritus had “revisited the glimpses of the moon” in those days, they would have found most abundant scope for tears and laughter. The principal authors and chief partisans of these serio-ludicrous troubles, are sketched off with all the tact and graphic finesse of a witty and well-informed woman of high rank.—Madame de la Fayette next puts forward her claims to notice, in “Memoires de la Cour de France, pour les annees 1688 et 1689.” These offer a gallery of portraits, traced with a light, but correct and graceful hand. There are now and then some not unpleasantly malicious

touches added to the features of the highest personages of the court, and particularly to those of the *pious* Madame de Maintenon.—The “*Souvenirs de Madame de Caylus*” also exhibit a picture of the court of Louis XIV.; but the fair authoress cannot be either accused of, or praised for, the same piquant maliciousness; she was related to the reigning favourite, and there is, consequently, a well behaved tameness about her pencil, that might have been very proper on her part, but is not so pleasurable to her readers. However, her *souvenirs* have been, and deserve to be generally read.—The *Memoires* of Madame de Stael, (Mademoiselle Delauny,) are so well known that they scarcely require notice. Who has not read over and over again her graceful, witty, and piquant account of the Liliputian intrigues of the Liliputian court of *Seeaux*? Madame de Stael has had the almost magical art to render a sojourn even in the gloomy Bastile, not only tolerable, but gay and attractive. To each of these memoirs is prefixed a biographical notice of the writer—which very proper accompaniment leaves nothing to desire to the purchasers of this very interesting collection.

FROM THE SAME.

The Works of Garcilasso de la Vega, surnamed the Prince of Castilian Poets. Translated into English verse; with a Critical and Historical Essay on Spanish Poetry, and a Life of the Author. By J. H. Wiffen. 8vo.

IT is with particular satisfaction that we notice the present able and elegant translation of a poet, whose beauties have hitherto been completely hidden from the English reader. We doubt not that the pleasure which these poems are calculated to excite, will be an inducement with many persons, to apply themselves to the study of Spanish literature, which has hitherto been much neglected amongst us. It is singular that the present volume should be the first specimen of a complete translation of the works of any of the Spanish poets, although ample justice has been done by many of our scholars to the beauty of their writings. We rejoice, indeed, that the first attempt to naturalize one of these illustrious strangers, should have been made by Mr. Wiffen, with whose talents as a poet, and ability as a translator, the public are not unacquainted, and who has executed his task in a manner highly creditable to his taste and judgment. In the eclogues, which are acknowledged to be the most excellent of Garcilasso's writings, Mr. W. has been very successful, and has admirably preserved the tenderness and feeling of the original.

FROM THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE LATE THOMAS LORD ERSKINE.

It has seldom occurred to us to be called upon to perform a duty in more accordance with our own sympathies, than in writing this last tribute to the labours, virtues, and patriotism, of Lord Erskine. Our deceased friend united, with his public talents, the feelings of a man, and the endowments of great genius. To the excess in which he possessed each of these qualities, is to be ascribed the affection in which he was so universally held. In statesmen of inferior or mechanical abilities, it is the object of their education, and their sedulous study, to sink the man in the office, and to approximate as far as possible to the qualities of mere machines without sympathies or affections. Such are half the present cabinet, but such was not Lord Erskine. This amiable man admitted into full play the keenest sensibilities of human nature, and indulged in the luxury of their enjoyment, forming his public character on them, feeling as a citizen as he did as a man; and, surrendering himself to his affections and antipathies, he trusted to their justice for the result. His intercourse with the world, even in the demoralizing profession of the law, neither corrupted nor warped his moral sympathies; and the renown which followed his exertions, never raised in him any undue assumption of his own superiority, or created any unworthy feeling of pride. With elements of human character so happily blended, and with the reputation of his unequalled powers as an orator, and of his immovable integrity as a patriot, it is not to be wondered, that he has for many years been one of the most esteemed characters of his age.

The Hon. Thomas Erskine was the third son of the former Earl of Buchan, and youngest brother to the present earl. The second, Henry, held an eminent rank at the Scotch bar, and died about seven years since. He entered very early in life into the navy, a service for which he had imbibed a strong predilection.

He never had the commission of lieutenant, but acted for some time in that capacity, by the appointment of his captain. He quitted the navy owing to the slender chance of obtaining promotion; and, having served as a lieutenant in consequence of the friendship of his commander, he was unwilling to return to sea in the inferior capacity of midshipman.

On quitting the naval service, he entered into the army as an ensign in the Royals, or first regiment of foot, in the year 1768, not from inclination, but because his father, with a small and strictly entailed estate, had not the means of assisting him, with convenience, to pursue one of the learned professions. He went with his regiment to Minorca, in which island he spent three years, and continued in the army about six.

He acquired considerable reputation for the acuteness and versa-

tility of his talents in conversation. Mr. Boswell mentions, in his memoirs of Dr. Johnson, the delight which the doctor and himself felt from the ability of young Erskine, in discoursing on some temporary topic.

Mr. Erskine had no merit whatever in the extraordinary adventure of embarking in the study of law, but it was literally and most unwillingly forced upon him by the importunities of his mother, the Countess of Buchan, after the death of his father; while the hopes of succeeding were fortified and kept alive, against his own prepossessions, by her counsel and persuasions. She was a lady of most uncommon acquirements and singular penetration; and, thinking that she perceived the capacity of her son, in the confidence of parental affection planned this scheme of his future destination, while he was absent in the army at Minorca.

Mr. Erskine was about twenty-six when he commenced the course of his legal studies. He entered as a Fellow-Commoner of Trinity College, in Cambridge, in the year 1777; and, at the same time, inserted his name as a student on the books of Lincoln's Inn. One of his college declamations, on the revolution of 1688, is still extant; and it displays extraordinary powers of language. It gained the first prize, which he refused to accept, not attending Cambridge as a student, and only declaiming in conformity to the rules of the college. An ode, written by Mr. Erskine about this time, in imitation of Gray's Bard, is worthy of notice as a sportive production of his fancy. He gave the manuscript to the editor, and it was published in the *Monthly Magazine*. Mr. Erskine had been disappointed by his barber, who, neglecting his usual attendance, prevented him from dining in the College-hall. In the moment of disappointment, hunger, and impatience, he is supposed to have poured forth that malediction against the whole race of barbers, with a denunciation, prophetic of a future taste for cropping and unpowdered hair.

Mr. Erskine did not enter into the University for any academical purpose, but merely to obtain a degree to which he was entitled as the son of a nobleman, and by which he saved two years and a half in his passage to the bar. His education had been previously completed in Scotland. His father, one of the most accomplished men of his time, had uniformly felt an extraordinary solicitude as to the education of his children, and removed from his family-estate for the purpose of residing at St. Andrew's, where he continued many years. During this time he procured for them a private tutor, one of the most elegant scholars of that part of the island, to assist their studies at the school and university. Mr. Erskine always pursued the study of the Belles Lettres with unremitted ardour, and had the advantage of imbibing from the most eminent persons of the day, that various and extended knowledge which can never be derived from books or solitary application.

In order to acquire a necessary knowledge of the mechanical parts of his future profession, he was persuaded, by the judicious

counsels of his friends, to enter as a pupil into the office of Judge Buller, then an eminent special pleader at the bar. During this period of his life, Mr. Erskine was subject to the necessities of a very limited income. He had been married about four years, and was obliged to adhere to the most rigid frugality of expenditure. In reviewing the difficulties he had encountered, and in contrasting them with the brilliant prosperity of his subsequent years, he must have felt a peculiar gratification; because he must have attributed his extraordinary elevation to the endowments allotted to him by nature, rather than to the caprice or partialities of fortune. The part sustained by Mrs. Erskine, before the cloud that overhung their first entrance into life was dissipated, is highly honourable to her feelings; she accompanied him to Minorea, followed his fortunes with constancy; and, while he was engaged in the pursuits of a most laborious profession, never suffered any pleasure or amusement to interrupt the assiduous discharge of her domestic duties.

While he remained in the office of Mr. Buller, he pursued the business of the desk with activity and ardour; and, on Mr. Buller's promotion, he went into the office of Mr. Wood, where he continued a year even after he had acquired considerable business at the bar. Special pleading, though frequently considered as a mechanical part of the profession, has lately arrived at a higher dignity than lawyers of former times were willing to allow it. The absolute and hourly necessity of this law logic is now recognised by every one who is conversant with the business of our courts of justice. It consists in a sort of analytical correctness, and its highest utility is derived from the habits of artificial acuteness which it imparts, and the nice and skilful subtleties on which it is perpetually occupied.

Having completed the probationary period allotted to the attendance in the inns of court, he was called to the bar in the Trinity Term, 1778; and was a singular exception to the tardy advancement of professional merit at the English bar. By a singular partiality of fortune, he was not tortured by the "hope deferred," and the sickening expectation of a brief in Westminster-Hall, which so many men of promising talents are doomed to undergo; but an opportunity was almost immediately afforded him of distinguishing himself. Captain Baillie, who had been removed from the government in Greenwich Hospital by the Earl of Sandwich, then First Lord of the Admiralty, and one of the Governors of Greenwich Hospital, had been charged with having published a libel against that nobleman, and the Attorney-General was instructed to move for a criminal information against him; and, to reply to this motion, was the occasion of Mr. Erskine's first speech in court. In opposing the motion of the Attorney-General, an opportunity presented itself of entering into the merits of the case in behalf of Capt. Baillie. He expatiated upon the services which had been rendered by his client, and on the firmness with which

he resisted the intrigue and artifice to which he attributed the prosecution set on foot against him. In the course of this speech, he attacked the noble earl in a tone of sarcastic and indignant invective. Lord Mansfield interrupted him more than once, but the advocate did not abate of the severity of his animadversions. It was at that time no common spectacle, to observe a man, so little known to the court and the bar, commenting, with asperity of remark, on the conduct of a powerful statesman, who held an elevated post in the administration, and distinguishing himself by a species of confidence not usually felt in early efforts of public speaking, under circumstances that rendered it more prudent to abstain from personal severity, and to conciliate the court he was addressing. These strictures on Lord Sandwich were unquestionably severe, but they are not unfounded. Colonel Luttrell, speaking of him in the House of Commons, observed, with a pointed eloquence, that "there is in his conduct such a sanctimonious composure of guilt, that the rarity and perfection of the vice almost constitute it a virtue."

This was the first trial of his talents at the bar, having been called only in Trinity Term, and having been employed for Capt. Baillie in the Michaelmas Term following. He is said to have been indebted for this opportunity to no interference, recommendation, or connexion. His acquaintance with Capt. Baillie originated in his having accidentally met him at the table of a common friend. Almost immediately afterwards Mr. Erskine appeared at the bar of the House of Commons, as counsel for Mr. Carnan, the bookseller, against a bill introduced by Lord North, then prime minister, to re-vest in the universities the monopoly of Almanacs, which Mr. Carnan had succeeded in abolishing by legal judgments, and he had the good fortune to place the noble lord in a considerable minority upon a division.

To the reputation which these speeches conferred upon him, it has been said, that he refers the subsequent success he has experienced in his profession, and that, as he left the court upon that occasion, nearly thirty briefs were offered to him by attorneys who were present. He was now surrounded by clients, and occupied by business. Of the various cases in which he was employed, it would be absurd to expect any mention, as they comprised the whole of the ordinary and daily transactions of the term and the sittings. For twenty-five years he was not engaged in this or that cause, but literally, for plaintiff or defendant in every cause, and there was a constant struggle which should retain him first.

The public feelings, in 1799, were altogether occupied by the interesting trial of Admiral Keppel. Mr. Erskine was retained as counsel for the admiral, owing to the ignorance which Dunning and Lee (who were originally engaged) displayed of sea-phrases, without some knowledge of which the case would have been unintelligible. The duty of a counsel before a court-martial is limited by the rules and usages of the court: he is not permitted to

put any question to the witnesses; but he may suggest to his client such as occur to him as necessary to be asked; nor is he suffered to address the court; and almost the only assistance he can render is in the arrangement of his defence, and the communication of such remarks on the evidence as are most likely to present themselves only to the minds of those who are habituated to the rules of testimony in courts of justice. This service for Admiral Keppel was most effectually and ably rendered by Mr. Erskine. Having drawn up his defence, Mr. Erskine personally examined all the admirals and captains of the fleet, and satisfied himself that he could substantiate the innocence of his client, before the speech which he had written for him was read. For his exertions he received a thousand guineas; and it was the proudest office of his life to have saved a good and honourable man from disgrace; and, even amidst the splendours of his succeeding fortunes, Mr. Erskine always looked back on this event with peculiar satisfaction and triumph.

He was now in possession of the best second business in the King's Bench; by which is meant, that sort of business in which the lead is not given to the counsel who have not yet obtained a silk gown, and a seat within the bar of the court; but an event took place in 1780, which called his talents into activity on the memorable occasion of defending Lord George Gordon. Mr. Erskine was retained as counsel for his lordship, in conjunction with Mr. Kenyon, afterwards Chief Justice. The duty which more immediately devolved on Mr. Erskine was that of replying to the evidence; a duty which he sustained with infinite judgment and spirit. His speech on this trial abounds with many of the most finished graces of rhetoric. It is rapid and impetuous; and altogether in that style and character which are most impressive in judicial assemblies. The exordium is composed after the artificial method of the ancients, who never begin an oration without an appeal to the tribunal they are addressing, upon the embarrassments and peril of the function they have undertaken. "I stand," said Mr. Erskine, "much more in need of compassion than the noble prisoner. He rests secure in conscious innocence, and in the assurance that his innocence will suffer no danger in your hands. But I appear before you a young and inexperienced advocate; little conversant with courts of criminal justice; and sinking under the dreadful consciousness of that inexperience." There was, perhaps, no department of his profession, in which Mr. E. reached higher excellence, than in his observations on evidence. The defence of Lord George Gordon required the exercise of these powers to their amplest extent. Having delivered to the jury the doctrines of high treason, he made a most dexterous application of those rules to the evidence, which had been adduced. They who study this speech will observe, with emotions of admiration, the subtleties with which he abates the force of the testimony he is encountering, and the artful eloquence with which he exposes its defects, and its contradictions. The concluding sentence is truly pathetic,

and it is a most astonishing effort of vigorous and polished intellect.

In May, 1783, Mr. Erskine received the honour of a silk gown: his Majesty's letters of precedency being conferred upon him, as it has been said, at the personal suggestion of Lord Mansfield. To this distinction, his portion of the business, and his acknowledged talents, gave him an unanswerable pretension. Mr. Erskine was a remarkable instance of a rapid advancement to this honour, not having been at the bar quite five years. His business was now considerably augmented, and he succeeded to that station at the bar, which had been so long occupied by Mr. Dunning, afterwards Lord Ashburton.

In no part of his professional engagements did Mr. Erskine deserve or acquire a higher reputation than in his mode of conducting trials for *crim. con.* It frequently fell to his lot to be concerned in behalf of plaintiffs in these actions, a circumstance which gave him considerable advantage; for besides the attention which is afforded to accusing eloquence, the sympathies of mankind are in alliance with him who hurls his invectives against the disturber of domestic peace, and the invader of conjugal happiness. To this honourable and useful end, the eloquence of Mr. E. was subservient. He called the slumbering emotions, and the virtuous sensibilities of men, into active league against the crime which he denounced; and his speech, in the memorable cause of Sykes and Parslow, will always be remembered as an uncommon effort of rhetorical ability. On behalf of defendants, his exertions are well known in the memorable cases of Baldwin against Oliver, and of Sir Henry Vane Tempest, in both which cases there were but one shilling damages. His speech in Howard against Bingham will be long remembered at the bar; it contained a most affecting apology for the lady, who was married against her consent, while her affections had been bestowed upon another: it abounds with pathetic remarks on the harshness and cruelty of chaining down to a man, whom she hated, a young and beautiful woman, and, for purposes of family arrangement or ambition, dedicating her life to a reluctant discharge of duties, the obligations of which she could not perceive, and the conditions of which she could not sustain. In this speech there was no apology for vice, but an excuse for human frailty, which was pleaded with great warmth and great eloquence.

He who looks for a perfect model of the style of Mr. Erskine, must examine his speech on the trial of Stockdale. When the charges against Mr. Hastings were published by the House of Commons, a Mr. Logie, a clergyman of the church of Scotland, and a friend of the governor-general, wrote a tract, in which those charges were investigated with some acrimony, but with considerable warmth and vigour: the pamphlet being considered as libellous, by a resolution of the House, a criminal information was filed by the attorney-general against Stockdale, who was the publisher, for a libel. In the course of his defence, Mr. Erskine urged

many collateral topics in favour of Mr. Hastings, in a style of fervid and ornamental eloquence. He takes notice of the violations of human happiness, for which the nation was responsible, in the exercise of her eastern dominion; concluding in the following strain:—

“Gentlemen; you are touched by this way of considering the subject; and I can account for it. I have been talking of man, and his nature, not as they are seen through the cold medium of books, but as I have myself seen them in climes reluctantly submitting to our authority. I have seen an indignant savage chief, surrounded by his subjects, and holding in his hand a bundle of sticks, the notes of his unlettered eloquence. ‘Who is it,’ said the jealous ruler of a forest, encroached upon by the restless foot of English adventure, ‘Who is it that causes these mountains to lift up their lofty heads? Who raises the winds of the winter, and calms them again in the summer? The same Being who gave to you a country on your side of the water, and ours to us on this.’” This is, perhaps, a species of rhetorical ornament more figurative than our national eloquence, which does not tolerate the boldness of the *prosopeia*, seems strictly to admit; yet it is impossible not to be struck with the sublimity of the passage, and the exertions of Mr. Erskine procured the acquittal of the defendant.

Mr. Erskine was elected member of parliament for Portsmouth in the year 1783; an honour which he derived from the reputation he had acquired at the court-martial which sat there on the trial of Admiral Keppel. His political character may be extracted from his speeches in courts of justice, as well as from his uniform conduct in parliament; and the merit of inflexible and active patriotism, and a rigid adherence to the principles of the Whig party, must ever be yielded to him. From no circumstance of his life are greater and more permanent reputation derived by Mr. Erskine than in his struggles in defence of the trial by jury. The law, as it was finally expounded by Mr. Fox’s bill, had been maintained by Mr. Erskine in the courts, and was seconded and supported by him in parliament. A strange paradox had crept into judicial practice, which, restricting the power of juries in questions of libel to the arbitrary interpretation of the judges, reduced them in fact to a shadow and a nullity. It was reserved for Mr. Erskine, in his argument in support of a rule for a new trial in the *Dean of St. Asaph’s* case, to concentrate all the doctrines, and to combine all the reasonings which lay scattered throughout so many volumes of legal learning. In this elaborate argument, he triumphantly established his position, that juries were judges of the law as well as the fact; and, upon the principles laid down in that speech, Mr. Fox framed his immortal bill, which happily rescued the question from controversy by the establishment of a criterion, to which the powers and duties of juries in libel cases may at all times be referred. On the original trial of the *Dean of St. Asaph*, at Shrewsbury, where Mr. Erskine appeared as counsel for the Dean, a spe-

cial verdict was delivered by the jury, finding the defendant guilty only of the fact of publishing. Mr. Justice Buller, who presided at the trial, desired them to reconsider it, as it could not be recorded in the terms in which they expressed it. On this occasion Mr. Erskine insisted that the verdict should be recorded as it was found. This was resisted by the judge, who, meeting with unusual opposition from the counsel, peremptorily told him to sit down, or he should compel him. "My Lord," returned Mr. Erskine, "I will not sit down—your lordship may do your duty, but I will do mine."

The independence exhibited by Mr. Erskine on every occasion, threw upon him the defences of persons prosecuted for sedition or libel by government. No reasoning can be more uncandid, than to infer that his political opinions had complete sympathy with those entertained by all the libellers who resorted to him for legal protection. As a servant of the public, a counsel is bound by the obligations of professional honour to afford his assistance to those who engage him in their behalf. It is the privilege of the accused, in a free country, to be heard impartially and equitably, and to be tried by the fair interpretation of the laws to which he is amenable. They who imagine that the advocate identifies with his own, the opinions and acts of the party he is representing, are carried away by erroneous reasonings, tending, in their consequences, to deprive the innocent of protection, by denying a fair measure of justice to the guilty. His defence, however, of Paine, in Dec. 1792, occasioned his sudden dismissal from the office he held as Attorney-General to the Prince of Wales!

The most brilliant event in Mr. Erskine's professional life, was the part cast upon him, in conjunction with Mr. Gibbs, at the State Trials in the year 1794. The accused persons looked to Mr. Erskine as their instrument of safety, and he undertook their several defences with an enthusiasm which rendered him insensible to the fatigues of a long and continued exertion. Nothing was omitted that could elucidate their innocence; nothing overlooked that could tend to weaken the force of the case stated against them by the crown lawyers. These trials lasted several weeks: the public expectation hung upon them with the most inconceivable anxiety, and the feelings of good men and virtuous citizens accompanied the accused to their trial, with hopes, not unmixed with apprehension, that although, from their acquittal, the liberty of the subject would receive additional strength and confirmation, yet, if convicted, the event was to be considered as the establishment of a glaring despotism.

In the prosecution of the publisher of Paine's *Age of Reason*, he appeared on the side of the prosecution; and a more eloquent, solemn, or impressive oration was never delivered, than that which Mr. Erskine made on this occasion.

In the receipt of 10 or 12,000*l.* per annum for professional fees, and in the flood of his public glory, he was, in 1806, on the death

of Pitt, chosen one of the new ministry, and elevated to the wool-sack, with the rank of an English baron. His natural sense of justice qualified him to preside in a court of equity; and his promptness led the public to hope that it would at length answer to its name. The Guelphs, however, having no fondness for Whig principles, or practices, soon found an opportunity to enlist vulgar prejudices against the ministry; and, having lost a bulwark in the name of Fox, they were expelled from power within twelve months after they had been raised to it. This result closed the public services of Lord Erskine,—he could no longer practise with his wonted glory at the bar, and his assistance to the state were reduced to those of a simple peer of parliament, while his independent 12,000*l.* per annum was reduced to a *pension*, as ex-chancellor, of 4,000*l.* From these circumstances arose a variety of adverse circumstances. He had made speculations which a fixed pension did not enable him to complete, and it became necessary to mortgage even the pension itself to meet expenses, and to become more dependent on friends than was compatible with the habits of his former life. An unhappy second marriage aggravated some of these difficulties; and, there is no doubt, but the last ten years of the life of this great man were rendered tolerable only by his own strength of mind, and his inherent principles of virtue.

In 1811 he had the chance of returning again to power by coalescing with the Earl of Moira; but he was a second time the victim of the stubbornness of his political allies, to whom he adhered from affection, in spite of his own judgment, a conduct which he repented ever afterwards.

Having no public employment, except in great exertions occasionally made in parliament, he has for several years amused himself by revising, for the press, an edition of his “*Speeches at the Bar*,” and he has, also, published some political pamphlets on various subjects of paramount interest. Against the late series of wicked wars carried on from 1775 to 1815, against the liberties and independence of mankind, he was the determined and avowed foe, and never committed himself but on one occasion, and then to oblige Lord Grenville, from whom he expected other concessions. For forty years the votes of both Houses have always recorded his voice on the side of liberty and liberality; and it was his avowed glory, and the only pride in which he ever indulged, that he had reached the highest station in his profession, and attained a peerage, without on any occasion compromising his principles, or the liberties of his country; and, in this respect, he used to say, that he hoped his example would be useful to those who followed him in a similar career.

He has left a considerable family, and some children by both his marriages. In conducting one of his younger sons to Edinburgh, he caught cold in the packet, was in consequence set ashore at Scarborough, whence he travelled by land to Scotland, but died on the 17th of November last, at his late brother's seat near Edinburgh.

His remains have been interred in Scotland, although he some years since prepared a splendid mausoleum in the church-yard of Hampstead. A meeting has, however, been held, of the leading gentlemen of the bar; and it has been determined to erect a public statue to perpetuate the remembrance of his talents, virtues, and varied merits.

The character of this great man was reflected by the actions of a life spent in the honourable exercise of an active profession. His various talents, even by the violence of party, were never questioned. He was unequal in his intellectual efforts, and the same may be affirmed of the greatest men who have flourished in eloquence, in poetry, or philosophy. No man was ever endowed with a greater share of constitutional vivacity: he was sportive and playful in his relaxations, and free and communicative to all who approached him. His countenance was lighted by intelligence; and, in his personal contour and manners, he was one of the most graceful men of his time. Nature had been lavish on him, and he did not abuse her gifts.

FROM THE NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

Poems, by Sumner Lincoln Fairfield. 12mo. New York.

It is strongly characteristic of the present state of literature in America that her poets are, for the most part, very young men. Amongst her enterprising population, there are few who are not destined to the pursuits of active life, and it rarely happens, that a man involved in the labours of a profession, or oppressed with the burden of business, can find either leisure or inclination to devote himself to the Muses. It would appear, therefore, that it is only in early youth, and before they become entangled in the engagements of society, that the bards of America are in the habit of indulging their poetical inclinations; and it is to this cause, very principally, that we attribute the incorrectness and imperfection which may be observed in their works. The little volume now before us is one instance, amongst others, of the truth of this fact. The poems which it contains were written at the early age of nineteen, and must certainly have been published before years of discretion. We hope, and we shall continue to hope, that we may receive across the Atlantic, works of high literary merit; and it is, therefore, somewhat provoking to find the Americans ushering into the world publications which may tend, in some degree, to justify the sarcasms which have been thrown out upon their literary productions. The preface to Mr. S. L. Fairfield's *Poems*, is one of the most perfect specimens of the art of *soaring* with which we are acquainted. These poems, he tells us, "are the effusions of a soul which looks back to the days of infancy, when the exuberant fancy revelled in the anticipation of paradisiacal enjoyments, and enamoured imagination loved to paint in the richest colours of delight, the blooming beauties of creation, which manhood finds are but the

illusive pageants of a fairy tale, with cankering sorrow and heart-rending disappointment!"

After this specimen of the author's prose, our readers will probably not be anxious to see any of his poetry, which is so untamed, irregular, and extravagant, as to weary the patience of the most lenient critic. Reason and common sense are frequently set at defiance, and metre and rhyme are treated with the utmost contempt. It is possible that Mr. Fairfield may possess some poetical talents, but at present they are hid under a mass of absurdities.

Why does not Mr. Bryant, to whom this volume is dedicated, favour the public with some more of his beautiful poems? The small collection which he lately gave to the world was so very creditable to himself and his country, that we should be sorry to find him laying down his lyre.

THE HOUR OF DEATH.

LEAVES have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the North-wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast *all* seasons for thine own, oh, Death!

Day is for mortal care,
Eve for glad meetings round the joyous hearth,
Night for the dreams of sleep, the voice of prayer—
But all for thee, thou Mightiest of the Earth!

The banquet hath its hour,
Its feverish hour of mirth, and song, and wine;
There comes a day for Grief's o'erwhelming power,
A time for softer tears—but all are thine!

Youth and the opening rose
May look like things too glorious for decay,
And smile at thee!—but thou are not of those
That wait the ripen'd bloom to seize their prey!

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the North-wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast *all* seasons for thine own, oh, Death!

We know when moons shall wane,
When summer-birds from far shall cross the sea,
When autumn's hue shall tinge the golden grain—
But who shall teach us when to look for thee?

Is it when spring's first gale
Comes forth to whisper where the violets lie?
Is it when roses in our paths grow pale?
They have *one* season—all are ours to die!

Thou art where billows foam,
Thou art where music melts upon the air;
Thou art around us in our peaceful home,
And the world calls us forth—and thou art there!

Thou art where friend meets friend,
Beneath the shadow of the elm to rest;
Thou art where foe meets foe, and trumpets rend
The skies, and swords beat down the princely crest.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the North-wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast *all* seasons for thine own, oh, Death!—[*New Month, May*

FROM THE NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

STUDIES IN SPANISH HISTORY.—NO. I.

Aragon.

THE kingdom of Aragon, which, by a fatality ever to be lamented by the friends of Spain, has always held a secondary rank in the Pyrenean Peninsula, was originally a fief of Navarre. A Count of Aragon was present at the election of Inigo Arista, the first king of Navarre who falls within the dawn of real Spanish history (A. D. 819 or 885). The first union of the two states was effected by the marriage of Garci Iniguez,* Arista's son, with the daughter of Fortun Ximenez, Count of Aragon.

That Inigo Aristo, as well as most, if not all the founders of the states of Navarre, Aragon, and Sobrarbe, came from the northern side of the Pyrenees is certain. Purer sources than the oppressive laws of the Spanish Visigoths were resorted to for materials in the political establishment of these sovereignties. In the preamble to the *Fuero* or Constitutional laws of *Sobrarbe*, it is said, that, Spain being in the possession of the Moors, the *Ricosombres* (chiefs or barons, literally, wealthy men,) had agreed to choose Inigo Arista for their king; and that for the purpose of establishing the fundamental code of the new kingdom, they had inquired among the Lombards and Franks, from whose statutes and customs such laws had been selected as were most suited to their infant monarchy.

* We wish, thus early, to acquaint the reader with the original use and formation of Spanish surnames. The Spaniards, like the Greeks, showed their immediate descent by a patronymic, ending in *ez*. We do not recollect any exception to this but *Garcia*, which generally loses the last letter, as a Christian name, and suffers no alteration as a patronymic, e. g.: *Garci Perez*, Garcia, the son of Peter; *Pedro* (anciently *Pero*) *Garcia*, Peter, the son of Garcia. There is also *Garces*, which we take to be the regular derivation from *Garcia*, the *z* changed into *s*, to avoid the immediate repetition of the dental sound of the *c*, formerly written *ç*, which is the same as that of the *z*. In a similar manner, *Sanchez* signifies the son of Sancho; *Gonzalvez*, more commonly *Gonzalez*, the son of *Gonzalvo*, generally written and pronounced *Gonzalo*. From *Rodrigo* was derived *Rodriguez*, and from *Ruy*, the abbreviation of that name, *Ruyz*. Men of distinction added to these two names an *agnomen*, taken from their estates, or from the place where their ancestors lived when they rose into notice. This, the Spaniards call *solar*; the ground or plot of a family. Hence, the preposition *de* or *del*, which is always prefixed to this designation, may be generally taken to be a mark of good descent. The proudest names in Spanish history are formed in this manner:—*Ruy Diez† del Rivar*; *Garci Perez de Fargua*; *Gonzalo Fernandez de Cordoba*, &c. &c.—The affectation of distinguished birth induced many to add the name of their birthplace to the patronymic, a fashion much in vogue among the learned of the sixteenth century; and, in progress of time, this addition was adopted as the surname of a whole family, either singly or with the patronymic; which, in modern times, is never altered. This is the cause of the multitude of *Rodriguez*, *Sanchez*, *Fernandez*, which, like the British Johnsons, Jacksons, Jamesons, &c. are found among the Spanish peasantry.

† Or *Diaz*, as it may be derived from *Diego* or *Diago*, (James) from which comes *Santiago*, i. e. *San Diago*, the combination of *di* before the *a* being intended to express the sound of the *j* in *Jacobo*, afterwards converted into *Jacomo*, in other parts of Europe.

The new constitution was confirmed by the Pope, and became one of the chief sources of the enterprising character, which, actuated by the consciousness of rights and freedom, made the Aragonese and Catalans so conspicuous in the history of the middle ages. Had the kingdom of Navarre been inseparably united with Aragon, it is probable that the Aragonese would have eventually prevailed over both the Moors and the other Christian states of the peninsula, spreading with their preponderance much sounder principles of government than the Castilian princes established among their subjects.

The original Aragonese government was a monarchy more limited by a feudal aristocracy than that of England under the immediate successors of the Conqueror. In England, the whole country was actually parcelled out to the barons who assisted William in seizing the crown. In Aragon, the king, who neither by birth nor wealth was much above the nobles, could only make grants of what the national enemy had still in their hands. These grants might be therefore called fees in military reversion, the chances of which depended on the united valour and success of the Christian chiefs. To their kings they were indebted for little more than the advantages of subordination, and such others as, in that warlike age, might arise from the personal talents and courage of the monarch. The form of words commonly reported as used by the Aragonese peers at the installation of their kings, though unattested by any historical document with which we are acquainted, is very much in the spirit of their original constitution.* By the *Fuero de So-brarbe*, the king was made to swear that he would govern the country according to law, and maintain the noblemen in their rights, so as always to lean towards the increase of their privileges.† This they claimed as their due for putting into the king's hands the towns and districts which they had already taken, or were to take, from the Moors. It was also enacted, that when any new conquest was made, the king should give proportionable shares of its emoluments to the *Ricoshombres* (barons), the *Cavalleros* (knights), and the *Infanzones* (esquires or gentry). That neither Inigo Arista, nor any of his successors, should hold a court of law, nor sit in judgment upon any case without a council. That the king should not make peace, declare war, grant a truce, or enter into a coalition with other princes, unless he had the advice of twelve *ricoshombres*, or an equal number of counsellors, chosen from among the elders, and the learned of the land. "These laws," says Zurita, "were religiously observed in this kingdom, the authority of the *ricoshombres* being so great that nothing was done without their opinion, advice, and sanction. The government, in fact, of the state, the conduct of war, and the administration of justice be-

* "We, who singly are thy equals, and jointly are above thee, deliver unto thee this kingdom, that thou mayest govern it according to law; if otherwise, we do not."—*Si non, non.*

† "Que los manternia en derecho, y siempre les mejoraria sus fueros." Zurita, lib. i. c. v.

longed, from that time, to the nobles, and the principal barons who were present at the election, and by whom the land was defended. These and their descendants were called *ricosombres*, a class so respected by the kings that they made them appear their equals. With them the monarch was obliged to share the revenues that accrued from the towns gained of the Moors, while, on the other hand, the *ricosombres* were bound to do military service by themselves, their knights and vassals, according to their allotted portions in these revenues, which were called *honours*. It must be confessed (Zurita concludes) that the kings who first reigned in Spain after the Invasion of the Moors, were very similar to those that were originally raised to that dignity, and who are described in history as permanent chieftains of armed bands."

The establishment of the *Justicer** of Aragon is nearly as ancient as the constitutional monarchy of that kingdom. His authority was directed to the preservation of the *Fueros*, or Constitutional laws. Had the love of liberty, and the jealousy of supreme authority, stopped here, the constitution of Aragon might have rivalled that which has raised England to the proud rank which she holds in the history of free nations. But the Aragonese noblemen were too independent of the crown to endure that degree of subordination, without which a monarchical government, after being distracted with sedition and anarchy, generally ends in uncontrolled despotism.

By the original compact between the king and the *ricosombres*, these might depose the reigning prince, and proceed so freely to the election of another, that even a Mahometan would have been eligible, had not the barons felt ashamed of that privilege. They claimed, however, and obtained another more adverse to the preservation of legal freedom. By the right called *de la Union*, the Aragonese barons were constitutionally entitled to rise in arms against the king, whenever they judged that the crown exceeded its prerogative. This monstrous privilege was granted by Alonso III. in the latter part of the thirteenth century; but the Cortes repealed it, under Peter IV. before the end of the fourteenth. The right of deciding, in case of a disputed succession, was used by the Aragonese peers till a comparatively late period. Ferdinand, Infante of Castille, the first king of that name, in Aragon, was chosen in 1412, among several claimants, by the award of the nine chief barons of the kingdom. The history of that transaction is extremely interesting, and gives a high idea of the wisdom and justice of the leading men of Aragon at that period. Ferdinand was well known for his honourable conduct towards his ward and nephew John II. of Castille, whose crown he might have usurped without the least opposition or hazard. It was this act of virtuous forbearance that gained him the votes of the electors.

The privileged classes of Aragon and Catalonia having been united

* We can see no reason why this classical English word should not be employed to translate the Spanish *Justicia*.

at an early period, (A. D. 1137,) it is as difficult as it would be tedious to mark minutely the peculiar differences which belonged to either country. As both, however, derived their modified feudal system from France, a great similarity appears in the distribution of power and its attendant honours. The Aragonese had their *Ricoshombres de Natura*, lineally descended from the first founders of their monarchy, who were, we believe, ten in number. Analogous to them were the *Nine Barons* of Catalonia; yet, to judge from the circumstances of the election of Ferdinand I. these obtained precedence of all the Aragonese peers, at the union of the two states, upon the marriage of Berenger, Count of Barcelona, with Petronila, the daughter of Ramiro, the monk, when the arms of Catalonia were preferred, by agreement, to those of Aragon. These nine barons, and such noble Catalans as had the title of Count, together with the Aragonese Ricoshombres, formed the original class of peers in the Cortes of Aragon. But their number was augmented, about the middle of the thirteenth century, by a patent of James I. called the *Conqueror*, who raised his own immediate retainers, the *Cavalleros*, *Meznaderos*,* to the rank and privileges of peers of the kingdom.

Lands appear to have been of little value while exposed to the daily incursions of the Moors. We find, accordingly, that the military fees in all the Christian kingdoms of Spain took their denomination from the towns on which the lords levied taxes. We do not, consequently, observe that gradation of tenures which prevailed in other countries. After the conquest of a large town, the principal leaders who assisted at the siege, had districts called *Barrios*, appointed to each, from the inhabitants of which they received the contributions otherwise due to the crown. In proportion to the amount of these taxes was the number of knights which each nobleman of the first rank was bound to lead into the field. The grants of such revenues being, in Aragon, called *Honores*, the service of the attendant knights was named *Cavallerias de Honor*. The same grants were denomininated *Feudos* in Catalonia and *Entierrast* in Castille.

On the taking of Zaragoza by Alfonso, the champion (A. D. 1118), the Spanish inhabitants were exempted from taxes, and classed with the *Infanzónes* or gentry of the kingdom. It seems a natural inference from this fact that the Christian population of Zaragoza, under the Moorish dominion, was small and of little consequence, and that this measure was intended to draw such inhabitants to that important city as might be able and willing to preserve it from future invasion. The ancient name by which the members of the privileged gentry is known, is *Hermunios*; a corruption, as Zurita believes, of the Latin word *Immunes*. The

* *Meznada* was a military division following the standard of one leader.

† Though this word might seem to bring the Castilian fiefs nearer to the character of those of England and France, every circumstance in the history of that country shows, that the lords depended not on rent, but taxation.

denominations of *Hidalgo*, in Castille, and *Homde paratge*, in Catalonia, are nearly equivalent to that of *infanzon*, in Aragon. *Paratge* is synonymous with *Peerage*, in the sense of equality to the privileged classes. Serfs, in the strict sense of the word, were unknown in Castille, and, we believe, nearly so in Aragon; but the evils of that sort of slavery were long prevalent in Catalonia. The feudal slaves were known by the appellation of *homes de Remensa*.

The early history of Aragon is, a good deal, mixed with romance and legendary fable. We will neither enter into critical discussions, nor undertake a connected narrative, but merely glance over the interesting history of that kingdom, selecting whatever is characteristic of the people, or of the original historians themselves. Fables and legendary tales are highly valuable in this light.

The birth of Sancho Abarea, the second king of Aragon, after its first union with the crown of Navarre, which at that period (A. D. 912) was styled the kingdom of Pamplona and Sobrarbe, may be classed with those traditionary legends, which, from a similarity in their marvellous circumstances, might be supposed to have some common origin, if the kindred features were not more naturally accounted for from a general resemblance in the early stages of civilization, among the European nations, not excluding the Greeks and Romans themselves. Abarea is the Romulus of Aragon, not indeed in every incident of the story, which is less improbable than that of the son of Mars, the nursling of a she-wolf, but in the extraordinary manner of his birth and the rural education of his youth.

Garci Iniguez, Abarea's father, succeeded Inigo Arista, in the crown of Pamplona. His wife, a countess of Aragon in her own right, being far advanced in pregnancy, perished, with her husband, by the hands of the Moors, who fell suddenly upon a defenceless village where the royal couple had retired with a small retinue. The original historians, though not agreed as to the place of this melancholy scene, are unanimous in asserting, that an infant was artificially brought to light just at the death of the mother.* The child, in this interesting and precarious state, was taken in charge by an Aragonese knight, from whom, according to Prince Carlos,† the historian of Navarre, he afterwards derived

* Abarea's birth is thus related by the Archbishop Don Rodrigo. "Cumque quadam die minus caute in quodam viculo, qui Larumbe dicitur, resideret, supervenientes Arabes improvidum occiderunt, et Reginam Urracam, uxorem pregnantem, in utero lancea percusserunt. Sed continuo, adventu suorum, latrunculis Arabum effugatis, Regina morti proxima, tamen viva, per vulnus lancee, sicut Domino placuit, infantulum est enixa; et fuit ministerio muliebri, vitæ, miraculo omnium, est servatus, et Sancius Garsia fuit vocatus."—*De Rebus Hispaniæ*, lib. v. c. xxii.

† Carlos, Prince of Viana, and rightful sovereign of Navarre, was kept from that crown and persecuted by his father, John II. of Aragon, in a manner not unlike that of Philip II. towards his unfortunate son of the same name. (See *New Monthly Magazine*, vol. V. p. 231.) The Prince of Viana died in 1461. He was a man of considerable learning. He translated the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle, from the Latin of Leonardo Aretino, and wrote a Chronicle of the Kings of Navarre, which is still in manuscript.

the name of Abarea. Sancho was reared, probably unconscious of his rank, among the fastnesses of the Pyrenees, during that period when Mahomet, the son of Abdoulrahman, the second of that name of the caliphs of Cordoba, led an army against Navarre, which wasted the whole territory of Pamplona, and took three castles from the Navarrese.*

Connected with the history of this invasion is the case of a Navarrese knight called Fortunyo,† whose good fortune is remembered as one of the many instances of generous munificence, among the Spanish Moors, which the national jealousy of the Christian historians has not been strong enough to conceal. Being taken prisoner in one of the castles just mentioned, Fortunyo followed the conqueror to Cordoba, where he lived twenty years. Zurita says, that at the end of that long captivity he received his liberty, and a large fortune, in presents, from Mahomet. Both the length of Fortunyo's residence at Cordoba, and the noble manner of his release, however, claim the honour of the transaction for Mahomet's successor, in the power, though not in the title of Omniade Caliph, his brother Abdoulrahman, the Magnificent.‡ Fortunyo's name has been saved from oblivion chiefly by the extraordinary longevity which crowned the eventful prosperity of his life. He lived one hundred and twenty-six years.

The election, or rather recognition of Sancho Abarea seems to have been made after an interregnum, probably occasioned by the

* Zurita, lib. i. c. vii.

† We believe that *ny* is the only combination of letters which, in the English alphabet, can express the sound of the Spanish *ñ*. We have adopted it the more readily, as it represents the Latin *ni* followed by a vowel, which the Spaniards express by the *ñ*. *Fortuño* comes from *Fortunius*.

‡ The reader, we trust, will thank us for transcribing the beautiful passage where Mr. Southey sketches the history of the third Abdoulrahman. (Introduction to the Chronicle of the Cid, p. xxviii) "His history is like a tale of Eastern splendour with an Eastern moral at the end. To gratify the vanity of a favourite slave, he built a town and called it after her name, Zehra, which signifies the ornament of the world. There were in its palace one thousand and fourteen columns of African and Spanish marble; nineteen from Italian quarries, and one hundred and forty beautiful enough to be presents from the Greek emperor. The marble walls of the hall of the Caliph were inlaid with gold. Birds and beasts of gold, studded with jewels, spouted water into a marble basin in its centre: the basin was the work of the best Greek sculptors; and above it hung the great pearl which had been sent to Abdoulrahman by the Emperor Leon. The extent of the building may be imagined by that of his seraglio, which contained six thousand and three hundred persons. This was his favourite abode. After the chase, to which twelve hundred horsemen always accompanied him, he used to rest in a pavilion in the gardens. The pillars were of pure white marble; the floor of gold, and steel, and jewellery; and in the midst there was a fountain of quicksilver. Yet Abdoulrahman left a writing which contained this testimony against the vanity of the world. From the moment when I began to reign, I have recorded those days in which I enjoyed real and undisturbed pleasure; they amount to fourteen. Mortal man, consider what this world is, and what dependence is to be placed upon its enjoyments! Nothing seems wanting to my happiness; riches, honours, to say every thing, sovereign power. I am feared and esteemed by my contemporary princes: they envy my good fortune; they are jealous of my glory; they solicit my friendship. Fifty years have I reigned, and in so long a course of time, can count but fourteen days, which have not been poisoned by some vexation."

invasion of the Moors of Cordoba. The historical accounts, however, only lead to this inference. Abarea was in his fifteenth year when the nobleman, the guide and protector of his childhood, presented him, in the dress of a peasant, to the meeting of the noblemen, who were convened at Jaca, for the purpose of filling the vacant throne.* The proof of his royal birth being evident, the rustic youth received the homage of the peers, and was installed in the throne of his fathers. In the glorious achievements of his reign, there is abundant confirmation that a noble and generous nature never fails to improve by an early acquaintance with the trials and evils of human life.

In Abarea's son, Garci Sanchez, we find a curious instance of that jarring and discordance between the mind and her organs of sensation—that mixed disease of body and soul, which, probably from its frequency in latter times, has forced a name from language, distorting the word *nervous* into an expression of weakness.† Garci Sanchez, though a man of tried courage, never prepared for battle without visibly trembling from head to foot.‡ He is known in Spanish history by the unchivalrous addition of the *Trembler*.

Sancho, the Great, succeeded his father Garcia, in 1031. To the crowns of Aragon, Navarre, and Sobrarbe, he united the earldom of Castille, in right of his wife, and made the river Pisuerga the boundary between his territory and the kingdom of Leon. By a first wife, Sancho had a son, called Ramiro.§ Elvira, the daughter of Sancho, Earl of Castille, whose lords did not assume the title of kings till the next generation, gave him three sons, Garcia, Gonzalo, and Fernando, whose wicked and infamous conduct towards their own mother is one of the well attested instances of the impunity with which the most sacred laws were broken in the dark ages, to which some admirers of the romantic would give the preference, compared with modern refinement.

At the instigation of Garcia, the two younger brothers entered into a conspiracy to accuse their mother of faithlessness to the royal bed. If the mention of such a monstrous and unnatural plot

* ".... Cum equite, qui eum clam nutriverat, veluti pastoris filius, vilissimis tectis indumentis et peronatus adducitur." Rodericus, *ibid.* The *perones*, or raw-leather shoes being called *Abareas*, in Spanish, some imagine that the young prince derived his appellation from that part of his dress. Others pretend that it was owing to his having enabled his army to cross the Pyrenees after a great fall of snow, by means of such shoes. But these forget that the raw-leather shoes are used by the Spanish peasantry in all the mountainous districts of the North, and that they are probably the first covering for the feet likely to have been invented in all countries.

† Dr. Johnson, probably in a fit of *nervous* peevishness, has marked the modern sense of the word as *medical cant*.

‡ ".... Garsias ... regnavit, qui dictus est *Tremuloans*, eo quod quando rumores periculi audiebat, vel debebat in prælio experiri, a principio totus tremulabat, sed postea constantissimus persistebat.—Rodericus, *De Reb. Hisp.* lib. v. c. xxvi.

§ It is very probable that this Ramiro was a bastard. Mariana thinks so; though the accurate Zurita says he was legitimate.

stagger the belief of a modern reader, he will feel disposed to look upon the whole as a fable, when he learns the motive assigned by the early Spanish historians. They say that King Sancho, being obliged to leave his favourite horse when he was to set off upon an expedition against the Moors, committed it to the care of his Queen, with an express injunction that no one should ride him in his absence. Urged, however, by the entreaties of her eldest son Garcia, Elvira would have consented to his using the horse, but for the remonstrances of a faithful knight, whose name, though omitted by most of the original writers, is reported to have been Sesé. Incensed by disappointment, and deeply hurt at being thwarted by a subject, Garcia vowed revenge against the Queen and her adviser. An accusation of adultery was the most obvious means of involving both in the same ruin. His brothers, either intimidated by his fierce courage, or swayed by his habitual ascendancy, agreed to back him in the combat by which he was to establish the charge.

Such is the uniform account which is found in the earliest records of the country. As no possible motive can be imagined for a fiction of this nature, we should, before we reject a mass of historical evidence, consider the customs and opinions of the times, as well as the manner in which history was written by the old chroniclers.

There is nothing improbable in the importance given to the king's charger at the Court of Navarre, nor in the fierce dudgeon of a semi-barbarian youth of royal birth, at being denied an indulgence on which he had set his heart—and that at the suggestion of his mother's trusty adviser, who, it may well be supposed, had frequent occasion to exert his influence against the insolent rashness of the three princes. Had every minute circumstance been mentioned, the fact would have appeared in aftertimes, without any character of improbability. But the rude and artless writers of those ages had not even a suspicion that a display of motives, and circumstances, which were obvious and familiar to every man in their days and country, would be required at a future period. Such cautionary descriptions, indeed, never occur in history, till the customs, which alone can elucidate an otherwise doubtful and suspicious narrative, are becoming obsolete, and strike the writers themselves as something curious and worth mentioning. Don Rodrigo, Archbishop of Toledo, whom we have more than once quoted, thought it necessary about the middle of the 13th century, upon relating the story of Elvira and her sons, to observe that, in those times, the value set upon an excellent horse, and the necessity of having it always at hand, to be in readiness against a sudden incursion of the Moors, induced the kings and noblemen to build the stables close by their ladies' chambers.* Few, indeed, will require

* "Tanta erat tunc temporis infestatio Arabum, quod Milites, Comites, et etiam Reges, in domibus, ubi uxorum thalami ornabantur, equis stationem parabant, ut quacumque hora clamor invadentium insonaret, ad equos et arma possent sine dilatione aliqua festinare."—Lib. v. c. xxvi.

being reminded that Andromache is represented by Homer as in the habit of feeding her husband's horses.

Having thus endeavoured to remove the critical doubts of the reader, we will now give him the conclusion of our story.

The day for the trial of the queen being come, the lists for the combat were opened before the castle of Naxera, where she was kept a prisoner. It was feared by those who knew the courage, power, and revengeful spirit of Prince Garcia, that the accused would hardly find a champion among the nobility of her kingdom. But the herald had scarcely proclaimed the trial by battle, when a knight, armed at all points, rode boldly towards the high scaffold on which the king and the judges were seated, and flung his gauntlet almost in the accuser's face. It was Ramiro, his half-brother, who swore he would either wash the stain fixed upon the queen, in the blood of her recreant sons, or seal with his own the high opinion he had of her virtue.

The *Master of the Field** had already examined the armour and weapons of the combatants, and placed them so as to avoid either of them being dazzled by the sun, in the encounter,† when a holy man, who inhabited a solitary cell in the fastnesses of the neighbouring mountains, broke through the surrounding multitude, and rushing fearlessly between the levelled lances, loudly called upon the king to stop the combat. The authority of austere sanctity was never disowned among the warlike Spaniards. At the monarch's command, the Master of the Field, who had backed his horse towards the barrier, darted, at one leap, between the combatants; their lances were raised, and all hung breathless on the emaciated lips of the Hermit. "Lady," cried he to the queen, who, veiled from head to foot in a black scarf, sat on a low stool below the platform, "Lady, look up to Heaven, and fear not that He who sits far higher than that throne from which thou darest the blind award of man, hath left thee to perish in thine innocence. And thou, credulous king, canst thou thus cast thy best jewel to be trampled upon, because the foul breath of calumny dared for a moment to dim its lustre! The wrath of Heaven fall but God forgive me, for thus forgetting the meekness of him whose minister I am. Look not, O king, for satisfaction to your doubts, from human blood. By that which was shed on the cross I swear, thy queen is innocent. The villainy of her accusers was but last night avowed to me by one of them, under the sacred seal of sacramental confession. I cannot—Heaven itself cannot save them from the shame which is due to their felony. But no other punishment may be inflicted upon them. The word of a priest has been pledged to the repentant sinner, when kneeling at my feet in voluntary confession of his crime. I cannot reveal the name of him who now saves his mother's life and honour; and it would be unjust that he

* *Maestre de Campo.*

† This was called *partir el Sol*, dividing the sun, and was never omitted among the Spaniards.

suffered with the obdurate and impenitent. Beware, therefore, O king, of a fresh error, worse and more impious than thy first. Beware of sealing up the lips of sinners by thy severity, and stopping their only access to the seat of mercy. Pardon thy sons, O king. I charge thee, pardon them as thou wilt have forgiveness."—"I will pardon them, holy man," said the king, half-choked with contending feelings,—“but can *you*, you my injured wife, pardon either them or me?”—"I have already done it: I forgave them before I left my prison, when I implored forgiveness and protection for myself," answered Elvira, raising the corner of her black veil, and looking with a peaceful and composed countenance on her husband. A shout of enraptured admiration rang round the lists. The sound of popular acclamation seemed to breathe an air of dignity over the mild and serene features of the queen. She flung the scarf, at once, upon her shoulders, and turning first to the people, then slightly inclining her majestic figure towards the king, "Sir," she said, "my forgiveness would be as full and unconditional as that which I desire from Heaven, if I alone were concerned. My .. sons .. yes, they shall still hear that name .. My sons have been appointed heirs to your vast dominions, each to wear an independent crown. Let this your will remain unaltered. Yet I owe a sacred duty to my subjects of Castille. The proud inheritance which Providence has placed in my hands must not have reason to accuse me of having neglected its honour. One alone of my sons has evinced a true sense of his guilt. Who it is must for ever remain sealed up in the bosom of the holy priest who heard his confession. But certain it is that the disclosure, which has saved me from dishonour, could not come from the author of the conspiracy. No: my Castilian subjects shall never do homage to Garcia. Would that I had the power to reward, with that crown, my noble, my generous champion! But I will not involve these kingdoms in a destructive quarrel merely to gratify my private feelings. All I demand is that the portions of the inheritance be differently allotted. Since one of the three must have Castille, let it be given to my son Fernando. A mother, next to God, can see into the hearts of her children. I well remember when last he hung upon my neck—I still feel his last kiss, and it tells me he could not have joined his mother's enemies but in the hope to save her." At these words, one of the knights, lifting both his hands and pressing them against his close helmet, was observed to lose his balance in the saddle and drop helpless on the horse's neck. A look of inexpressible tenderness was directed by the queen to the spot; but beckoning with her hand to hush the disturbance which the prince's attendants had occasioned to prevent his falling to the ground,—“My last and most sacred duty,” she continued, “the acknowledgment of my gratitude, remains to be performed. Thou, Ramiro, shall henceforward be my adopted son. The states of Aragon, which, upon my marriage, the king settled upon me, shall be thy own inheritance. It is not in my power to do more.

Heaven, I trust, will crown thee with such blessings, as man cannot ensure even with the gift of a throne. Strong, however, as is the impulse of my gratitude, and ardent as my prayers are for thy prosperity, I still more fervently implore mercy upon the unrepentant. But prayer is sooner heard when asking blessings, than when it attempts to stand between a hardened offender and the uplifted arm of divine vengeance."

Fernando inherited the states of Castille, raising them to the rank of a kingdom, from that of an independent earldom. By his marriage with Sancha, the only child of Bermudo, King of Leon, he ascended the throne of that kingdom. His eldest brother Garcia, the author of the conspiracy, who reigned in Navarre, engaged in war against him; but, being slain at the battle of Atapuerca, (A. D. 1054) Fernando, for the first time, joined the three kingdoms of Castille, Leon, and Navarre, and was called Emperor of Spain. Gonzalo, who had been made King of Sobrarbe and Ribagorza, fell by the hand of an assassin. His estates accrued to the noble Ramiro, the queen's champion, who joined them in perpetuity to his kingdom of Aragon.

FROM BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

Travellers in America—American Travellers—Washington Irving.

FROM a person of this sort,* our readers do not of course expect any thing like what is really wanted in England, in the shape of a book of Travels in the United States of America. We have no work which gives us any tolerable notion of the state of manners in that country, as compared with the state of manners with which we are acquainted at home—and we do not, to confess the truth, see any great probability of our being soon in possession of any such work. In point of fact, very few persons who are at all qualified to speak as to the state of manners *here*, ever dream of going across the Atlantic Ocean; and the few who might be able to do any thing worth while in this way, have other matters to think of when engaged in such peregrinations. They are merchants: they transact some business which they did not choose to entrust their agents with, and make the best of their way home again. Or they are persons, who have, by some accident or other, been chucked out of their line of life here: they settle in America; and it is by no means their interest to be too busy in the drawing of comparisons between what they have been obliged to leave, and what they have had the fortune to find.

By far the greater part of those educated Europeans, who have chanced to make any remarks upon American manners, it is but justice to say, do not appear to have penetrated beyond the region of taverns and lodging-houses, steam-boats and stage-coaches. The

* W. Faux.

little sketches given by our friend John Howison, and others of this class, are *too* ridiculous. We have all seen in Americans travelling in this country, sufficient evidence, that *these* are either *not* faithful portraitures, or the portraitures of what nobody cares much for having painted. No English gentleman thoroughly acquainted with the modes of society here, and in possession of the means of access to the best society of America, has as yet come before the public in the character of an American traveller. Indeed, so very few such persons go to America, that any one individual of the class would be sure to attract to himself, by describing what he saw there, such a degree of scrutiny and animadversion, and probably of ill-will, that it is no wonder there should be so much reluctance. Besides, the chances are, that every gentleman so qualified, who makes such a tour, has personal connexions on the other side of the water—friends and relatives, in all likelihood, whose feelings he would be very sorry to run the least risk of wounding, merely for the sake of affording entertainment or even instruction (of this sort) to his friends at home.

Almost our only means of judging, then, consists in our own observation of Americans sojourning occasionally among ourselves: and such (we speak for ourselves) we can never be persuaded to regard otherwise than with exceeding distrust. The Americans whom we see, are for the most part very young; and it would be extremely unfair to take them in their unfledged condition, for proper specimens of the same animal in maturity of years and experience. No doubt, they must improve very much after they leave us: the cares and occupations, as well as the ties and affections, of manly life, must exert their usual influences in chastising the exuberance of self-love, or at least in softening the glare of its outward manifestations. At the same time, it can do no harm to say, that the manners of these young men *are* for the most part characterized by a measure of free-and-easiness, which would have no chance of being altogether pardoned in Europeans of the same condition, merely on the score of youth. What the cause may be, we know not: but it is impossible to deny the fact, that nineteen out of every twenty young Americans, (even of the best class,) are intolerably cool fellows. It is not boyish coxcombry: they in general dress very ill, and are slovenly in their exterior. It is a sort of precocious garrulity, and worse even than that calm hardened affectation of having outlived the feelings of youth.

The doctrine of absolute political equality, may be at the root of this somewhat displeasing style of manners; but that is no excuse. One man is not necessarily entitled to treat another as his equal, merely because he has the same right to vote for a member—but these people appear to act exactly as if this were the case. This sentiment seems to overrun every corner of their minds. They have no respect of persons; they assume a certain loftiness, as if they were giants to us, because their rivers are seas to ours. They have settled the whole matter ere they started. And yet—it is not

quite so neither. They feel unhappy in the knowledge that there may be a lord in the room; and one of them actually published a book not long ago, the object of which was to prove that an American gentleman has no reason to walk behind an English baronet! This is the sort of thing that lets the cat out of the poke. They cannot get entirely rid of the old prejudices, and they live in a feverish anxiety to show themselves in the minutest particular under the influence of the new. They are not at home, and in endeavouring to appear so, they overact their part.

They stare from an excessive dread of being caught in the unfreemanlike sin of blushing—and chatter *a'l'outrance*, because they would not have any body to suppose that Shakspeare's rule

—Be checked for silence,
But never taxed for speech—

could be intended for A President in *posse*.

Of all this, as we have said, there can be no doubt the experience of after years must render the better spirits thoroughly ashamed. Indeed, the few Americans who do visit us at a more mature period of life, are comparatively quite free of such impertinences; and it need scarcely be added, that the most accomplished of them are entirely so. We must not name names—but how can we avoid mentioning the one delightful name of Washington Irving—a man whose genius must have been at all times too fine to live elsewhere than in the companionship of most perfect modesty?

We wish from our hearts *he* would turn, or rather return, to the portraiture of Transatlantic manners.—His Sketch-book was admirable; but how infinitely superior the American part of it to the English! His Bracebridge-hall was admirable too; but what did it contain that could bear a moment's comparison with Rip van Winkle, or the Legend of Sleepy Hollow? But to speak the plain truth, Diedrick Knickerbocker is, after all, our favourite. There is more *richness* of humour, and there is more *strength* of language too, in those earlier efforts—and why?—why, simply because the humour is thoroughly Transatlantic, and the language that of a man describing what he knows in all the secure knowledge of native experience. We have plenty of people who can describe English manor-houses more from the life than he, and there is no want of people, who can describe German *Schlösses*; but who, except Washington Irving, can portray the manners of America, in a style fitted for the thorough comprehension of European readers? If he takes to it now, he will describe them infinitely the better for the experience he has had of other men and modes of life. He may, in neglecting this walk, be a most elegant English author, but, by adhering to it, he must be the first man in a walk of his own.

Never were more abundant materials in the (almost) exclusive of any one man of genius—and we cannot but regret to see him neglecting them so much as he seems to do now-a-days. He can never be a Fielding, a Smollet, or even a Goldsmith here; but *there*, what

might he not be? Even his countrymen will prefer English pictures of English manners, and German descriptions of German manners, to the best he can ever produce—But who is there to fill his place in the description of American manners, either for our behoof, or for the behoof of the Americans themselves?—Who would not have preferred a Pennsylvanian farm house, to an English hall from him? Who would not give fifty such English generals as he can fashion, for one distinct portrait of a genuine old Washingtonian? Why should he dabble among English poachers, when we have our own Crabbe, and the hunters of a thousand Savannah's *carent vate sacro*? We don't want him to describe the lap-dogs of our maiden aunts—what are the pets of *his*? As for "Students of Salamanca," "Serenades," and "Donna Isabellas," we had certainly indulged the hope that they were all entombed for ever in the same grave with Hassan the son of Albumazar, the Dervish of Mount Libanus, and the Vision of Osmyn Benomar.

FROM THE LONDON LITERARY GAZETTE.

Extracts from *Mrs. Heman's Tragedy of the Vespers of Palermo.*

Youthful Visions.

—Oh! from the dreams
Of youth, sweet Constance, hath not manhood still
A wild and stormy wakening?—They depart,
Light after light, our glorious visions fade,
The vaguely beautiful! till earth, unveil'd,
Lies pale around; and life's realities
Press on the soul, from its unfathom'd depth
Rousing the fiery feelings, and proud thoughts,
In all their fearful strength!—"Tis ever thus,
And doubly so with me; for I awoke
With high aspirings, making it a curse
To breathe where noble minds are bow'd, as here.

Futurity.

—There is no joy!
—Who shall look thro' the far futurity,
And, as the shadowy visions of events
Develope on his gaze, midst their dim throng,
Dare, with oracular mien, to point, and say,
"This will bring happiness?"—Who shall do this?
—Why, thou, and I, and all!—There's One, who sits
In his own bright tranquillity enthroned,
High o'er all storms, and looking far beyond
Their thickest clouds; but we, from whose dull eyes
A grain of dust hides the great sun, e'en we
Usurp his attributes, and talk, as seers,
Of future joy and grief!

Glowing Scenery.

—Look all around! these blue transparent skies,
And sun-beams pouring a more buoyant life
Thro' each glad thrilling vein, will brightly chase
All thought of evil.—Why, the very air
Breathes of delight!—Thro' all its glowing realms
Doth music blend with fragrance, and e'en here
The city's voice of jubilee is heard,
Till each light leaf seems trembling unto sounds
Of human joy!

*Hair Cutting.**Woman's Destiny.*

Is not the life of woman all bound up
 In her affections?—What hath *she* to do
 In this bleak world alone?—It may be well
 For *man* on his triumphal course to move,
 Uncumber'd by soft bonds; but *we* were born
 For love and grief.

HAIR CUTTING.

From the Confessions of a Footman in Blackwood's Magazine.

You may recollect, perhaps, Mr. Editor, that, about thirteen years ago, certain Orders of Council (issued during the war) shut out the Birmingham manufacturers, for a time, from the American market. The joy which pervaded my native town, when these Orders were taken off, was boundless. Some people illuminated their houses; others blew themselves up with gunpowder; balls, routs, and concerts, night after night, were given by every family of any gentility; and the six hackney coaches of Birmingham were bespoke for full dress parties sixteen deep. But, if it's an ill wind that blows nobody good, I am sure I may say, that's a good wind which blows nobody evil; it happened, on one of these evenings of general rejoicing, that a traveller, who was staying at the "Hen and Chickens" hotel, took a fancy to require the assistance of a hair-dresser.

For my sins, not a single fashionable barber was to be met with! Mr. Frizzlewig's people were all engaged for the next week. Mr. Tailcomb was sent to; but he "could not come in less than two hours." At last, the waiter (who was to bring a barber, whether he could get one or no) bethought him of us, and ran down with the gentleman's commands.

Mr. Napkin's intimation produced an immense sensation in our back parlour. My master had met with an accident the day before—he was the real barber of whom the story is told, that cut his own thumb through the cheek of his customer. Our big 'prentice was gone out for all the afternoon, to decorate the young ladies, by contract, at "Hollabaloo House" boarding-school. I—the *enfant perdu* of the scissors—was the only disposeable force! But great exigences must be met with appropriate exertions of daring. An introduction at the "Hen and Chickens" was an opportunity not to be neglected. John Blowbellows, the blacksmith, who had been grumbling because *I* was going to shave him, was now informed that he could not be shaved at all; and, with instructions to "cut gently," and "to charge at least half a crown," I was hurried off to "the gentleman at the inn."

The first sight of my new patient set my nerves dancing in all directions. He was a huge, tall, brawny, red-hot Irishman, with a head of hair bright orange, and as curly as that of a negro.

"Cut my hair, boy," he said, in a voice like the grating of

wagon-wheels; "and, you spalpeen, be handy, for it's these twenty-four hours that I'm waiting for you."

I had cut two descriptions of hair in my time; but Mr. M'Boot's was neither of these. In the smooth, straight lock, I succeeded pretty well; for I could cut an inch or so off all round, and tell by my eye when all was even. And in the close crop of the charity-school, I was at home to facility; for it was only running the comb along, close to the scalp, and against the grain, and cutting off every thing that appeared above it. But the stranger's hair was neither in the lanky, nor the close hogged mood. It was of a bright red colour, as I have said before—stiff as wire—of an inveterate tight round curl—and bushy to frightfulness, from excess of luxuriant growth. He had started from London with it rather too long; worn it, uncombed, on a three months' journey through Wales; and waited till he reached Birmingham, that he might have it cut in the fashion.

"Cut my hair, I say, you devil's baby," repeated this knight of the appalling chevelure, imbibing a huge draught from a tumbler of brandy and water, which he was consuming while he dressed, and recommencing, in a horrible voice, to sing "*The Lads of Shillelagh*," a measure which my entrance had for the moment interrupted. I obeyed, but with a trembling hand; the very first sight of his head had discomposed all my faculties. I plunged into the operation of adjusting it as into a voyage over sea, without rudder or compass. I cut a bit here, and a bit there, taking very little off at a time, for fear of losing my way; but the detestable round curl, rolling itself up at the moment I let go the end, defeated every hope, every chance, of regularity.

"Thin the rest," blasphemed the sufferer, "and so leave it, for I'll not wait." This command put the finishing stroke to my perplexity. Thinning was a process entirely past my skill; but a fresh execration, interrupting "*The Lads of Shillelagh*," left me no longer any power of thought. I had seen the business of "thinning" performed, although I did not at all comprehend it; I knew that the scissors were to be run through the hair from one side to another with a sort of snip—snip—all the way, so I dashed on—snip—snip—through the close round curls, quite surprised at my own dexterity, for about a minute and a half; and then, taking up my comb to collect the proceeds of the operation, three-fourths of the man's hair came off at once in my hand!

What followed I have never exactly been clear to. Mr. M'Boot, I think, felt the sudden chill occasioned by the departure of his head-gear: at all events, he put his hand to his head, and motioned to rise. I made a rush to the door, muttering something about "heating irons;" but, as I turned round, I saw discovery in his eye. I see him even now, with a countenance more in amazement than in anger, standing, paralyzed beside the chair upon which he had been sitting, and rubbing his head with the left hand, as doubting if the right had not misinformed him; but, at the moment when

the thing occurred, I thought only of my escape. I made but one step to each flight of stairs; clung to the basket of a London coach which happened to be starting at the moment, and, in five minutes, with the "thinning scissors" still hanging to my fingers, lost sight of Birmingham—perhaps for ever.

"My native land, good night!"

MISTRESSES, MASTERS, AND SERVANTS.

From the same.

THE Honourable Mrs. Whirligig wanted a footman five feet eight inches high. Fixed with this lady, only two doors out of Portman-Square, with four male companions in servitude, and in the society of almost twice as many damsels,—with splendid accoutrements, good *cuisine*, liberal stipend, and small beer unknown,—I made up my mind that I was settled for life. But there are circumstances, sir—I am afraid you will begin to think that I can never be contented,—but there are circumstances which may neutralize even advantages like these!

The Honourable Mrs. Whirligig had, I believe, no other fault than that of being the most unreasonable woman in the world. She was good-natured at times; but *fact* never made any impression upon her. Setting all hours and regulations at defiance herself, she was furious from morning till night at the irregularity of her dependants. If she wanted a particular tradesman at one o'clock, it was useless to say, that he had been ordered to come at two. From the moment a new Waverley Novel was advertised, what ratings did I not receive, if it happened to be detained on the road! I don't think she once gave me a right direction all the while I lived with her; but, if I had failed to find any place, (even although there were no such place in the world,) dismissal, without a character, would have been my lightest punishment.

Then the walks, and the messages, in every weather, were inconceivable. After sending me through a hail-storm from Berkley-Square to the Bank, she would be surprised that I was not ready to wait in the drawing-room the moment I came back. She had a quantity of gold-fish too, who seemed to have been spawned for my especial torment. There was a pump in the garden of Lady Anne Somebody, full a mile and a half off, the water of which was sovereign, she fancied, for the health of gold-fishes; and to this pump, with two great pitchers, I was compelled to walk every day. Again, as ladies' footman, it was my duty to attend the ladies of our family on all occasions; and the power even of a London footman has its limits. All the ladies of our family kept different hours of business and amusement, and all expected me to be always ready. My mistress kept me up at parties the whole night; and the young ladies, her daughters, kept me out shopping the whole

day. I used to come home with my mistress at four o'clock in a summer's morning from a rout; and the young ladies, and their governess, wanted me to take their morning's walk with them at six!

"Francis!

Anon, anon, sir."

I might go on to give the details of my subsequent services with the Dowager-Countess of Skin-Flint, and the West India Governor Whip and Strip—with the first of whom I lived in a superb family mansion, where board-wages, of the closest character, were the order of the day; while the governor, who chose to make his servants "part of his family," having found negroes thrive well on salt fish and damaged rice, saw no reason why the same diet should not prove salutary to English domestics.

I might speak of the Miss Just-enoughs, who jobbed a carriage, and dined upon eggs and bacon; but who, nevertheless, discharged me for taking my hand once from my hat, in listening to a message much longer than a bill in Chancery.

Or I might talk of the Earl of Cut-and-run, with whom luxury was even matter of command; but who turned me off, nevertheless, for refusing to hang a Newfoundland dog, when the animal would not jump a fifth time off Richmond-bridge for a wager.

I might go on, too, to relate the thousand-and-one rebuffs which I received in the course of my various applications for service. My being rejected at one house, because I was too tall—at the next, because I was too short—at a third, because I was not "serious"—at a dozen, because I did not fit the last man's livery. I might comment generally upon the unfairness of masters and mistresses, who blame servants for bad weather, non-arrival of the post, intrusion of unwelcome guests, and all other current inconveniences—who measure, in their estimate of fitting employment, the greatest quantity of work which can be done in the hour, and expect just four-and-twenty times as much to be performed in the day—who devise impossibilities with infinite thought, and expect to have them performed without any thought at all—who make up their minds, whenever any article is missing, that "the servant" must have taken it, because he is obviously the person most in need of it—who allow their domestics not even those infirmities which are inseparable from our common nature—who believe them impervious to wet, insensible to cold, and unsusceptible of fatigue—who talk ever of their mercenary feeling, their ingratitude, or their infidelity—and look for devotion, disinterestedness, and affection, in a being who only exists upon the tenure of their caprice; and who is but too well aware, that, after years of faithful service, it needs but the whim of a moment, and he has to begin the world again.

But I will not, unless in passing, complain of these afflictions.

On the contrary, I will confess, in earnest of repentance—I will acknowledge my own crimes, for iniquities I have committed.

I do repent me that, while starving in the service of Miss Just-enoughs, I ate the mincemeat out of certain pies, and stuck the tops on again as before—to the manifest discredit and severe jobation of the pastry cook. I do regret that out of aversion to Mr. Twangle, the music teacher, I spilled a plate of soup into his lap one day, when he dined with the Earl of Cut-and-run. I regret that I strangled two of Mrs. Whirligig's gold fishes, to make her think that the water, a mile and a half off, was unwholesome for them—I regret that I rubbed a hole in governor Whip and Strip's livery, because he contracted with his tailor, and returned the old clothes. I say, in sincerity, that I do repent these things; and that, spite of temptation or provocation, I will so offend no more.

FROM BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

American Literature—English Copy-Rights.

Of course, there is nothing whatever in this book* concerning what *we* might have been most anxious to receive some information about—viz. the present condition of *literature*, in the United States of America. This was a matter entirely out of our friend's way: and we do not mean to say, that if *he* had touched thereupon, we should have thanked him.

We wish very sincerely, however, that some American scholar would write something like a sketch of what has been, and is going on. Their Reviews, &c. seldom or never travel so far as this; and when a stray number does find its way, it is sure to be, three-parts out of four, occupied with English books of the preceding year, which are either perfectly well known to every body here, or irremediably forgotten. Why have they no journal exclusively their own—their own in subject, as well as in execution?—as much their own, for example, as our English journals are English?

We see but few of their books either. A life of "James Otis" was lately put into our hands, and we expected much entertainment from the history of one of the great men of the Revolution. We were sadly disappointed. It is such a book as a young Irish student fresh from Trinity might be supposed to write about Emmett—for we will not mention Curran—a mere piece of boyish drivelling—nay, "worse of worse extended," of boyish book-making. "Letters on the Eastern States," seemed to us to be another very mediocere affair; and as for "The Idle Man," "Koningmarke, the Long Finne," and all the other endless imitations of the Sketch-book, and Knickerbocker, they are to us utterly unmeaning imbecility. The only tolerable attempt in the poetical

* Faux's Memorable Days in America.

way that we have happened to meet with, is a very little book entitled "*Percy's Masque*,"—and it is much more than tolerable. It is really, if the author be a very young man, a most promising Essay. There is an elegance of language, which shows perfect and intelligent familiarity with our models of the best age; and there is a certain elegance of thought and conception, which renders us even more anxious to be informed of the posterior proceedings of the author. Two different editions of our Magazine,* by the way, are published every month within the United States: and one of them at least beats the original hollow, in the weighty matters of paper, ink, and typographical execution, as well may be, where there is neither the hurry, nor the expense of authorship. Would it be too much for one or both of the publishers who are thus thriving upon our exertions, to make some return now and then in the shape of a parcel of American books? We throw out the hint, not doubting that our good friends will take it in good part; and we shall certainly be disappointed if it meets with no attention at their hands.

Since we are talking of such matters, there is a notion that has long been in our heads, and we shall take this opportunity of mentioning it—assuredly not with any views, or the possibility of them, as to ourselves. We regard the Americans—how could we do otherwise?—as immeasurably nearer to us than any other people in the world; and in spite of all jealousies and prejudices, the two nations must continue kindred as long as they speak the same tongue. Now, although we are living under different governments, we really can see no good reason why that circumstance should at all affect the literature which is, and ever must be, the common food of both. In the last age, English authors had no remedy when their books were pirated in Ireland—that has been corrected—it was corrected long before the Union. Why, merely because the Americans have President Monroe, and we stick to King George, should the author who writes equally for England and America, (as all authors who write in the common language must do,) why should he be paid for his writings only by one half of his readers? This is not fair in itself; and the doing away with such a thing, would tend, we suspect, much more than most people can have any notion, to the diffusion of friendly and benignant feelings between the inhabitants of the two countries. Look to Germany for an example. Surely there are more natural ties between us and our American cousins, than between the subjects of

* This is a slight exaggeration, somewhat in the style of an article published in Blackwood some years ago, called "*An Hour's tête à tête with the Public*," in which great things were affirmed of the circulation of their Magazine at home and abroad, their profits, &c. which they gave forth, knowing that large deductions would be made from their assertions, and believing that the remainder would be after all more than the truth. The truth is, that there is *not one* edition of their book published in America. It *was* reprinted three years, but was discontinued a year ago.

the different states of that country. Yet their literature *is* considered as a common property, which it were sin and shame to leave unprotected; and the poet who writes and publishes in Berlin, draws as much profit from the copies of his book sold in Dresden, Munich, or Hanover, as if these were the capitals, not of other kingdoms, but of other countries. Why should it not be so with those who have the same Shakspeare, and the same Franklin?

The proposal would certainly come with the best grace at present from the other side of the Atlantic: but they must hope that the benefit would ere long be quite reciprocal; and far be it from us to hope otherwise. As things are, they have the mortification to see their best writers publishing here rather than at home; and in fact, even at this moment the thing tells much more *against* American genius, than it does *for* American purses.

There would be something very delightful in the spectacle of two great nations, whose blood is the same, and the far best part of whose feelings and manners must be the same also, thus recognising the rights of that genius, which, whatever may be the course of external events, nothing can prevent from being and continuing to be a common property,—and, we should fain believe, an equal pride.

Peculiar Effects of burning on Limestone or Chalk.

M. VICAT, of whose excellent work on Cements and Mortars we gave a short account, vol. x. p. 407, has lately obtained some singular results in the burning of lime. Many years since he observed, whilst burning pure lime with charcoal and coal in a small furnace, that if the fragments of lime on passing through the furnace into the ash-pit, were again put in with fresh fuel, and this many times successively, a lime was obtained incapable of slaking, but which, broken up and made into a paste, had the remarkable character of setting under water.

It is an old opinion among lime-burners that limestone which has cooled before it has been completely burnt, cannot by any quantity of fuel be converted into quick lime, and M. Vicat considers this opinion as supported by the experiment above. It appears to result, M. Vicat says, that pure calcareous matter, as chalk or marble for instance, may be brought by fire into an intermediate state, being neither lime nor a carbonate, and that in this state it has the property, when pulverised and made into a paste, of setting under water.

Chalk converted into lime, and slaked in the usual way, yields a hydrate, which, made into a paste, will not harden in water; but the same lime left to fall into powder by long exposure to the air, and then made into a stiff paste with water, will solidify very sensibly after immersion. The action of the air here occasions the formation of a compound analogous to that afforded by imperfectly burnt

chalk, being like that, neither completely lime or completely carbonate; and it enjoys the same hydraulic properties.

Ten equal portions of finely-powdered chalk were taken, and a plate of cast-iron being heated red hot, they were placed upon it; one portion was allowed to remain three minutes, another six, a third nine, and so on, and during the time they remained on the plate they were continually stirred, that all parts might be equally calcined. These portions were mixed up, with a small quantity of water, into pastes of equal consistency, no signs of slaking were observed; the first portions gave the ordinary odour of moistened chalk, the latter portions gave the alkaline odour belonging to lime, and were decidedly alkaline. After twenty-four hours of immersion in water all the numbers, except the first, had set, as hydraulic lime would have done, and became harder daily, whilst the first remained soft. When, after some time, the comparative hardness of the second and the tenth were tried, no apparent difference could be perceived. Viewing these substances as mixtures, in various proportions of lime and carbonate of lime, M. Vicat thought it probable they might be imitated, but no mixture made by adding lime and carbonate of lime, to each other, gave the least signs of solidification under water.

Very analogous results to these were obtained by M. Raucourt de Charleville; but the most remarkable effect was observed when the fuel used was charcoal. He had prepared a mixture of pure lime and clay, which, when dry was broken into small pieces, and burnt, either on a heated plate or in a furnace, all the results furnished hydraulic lime, except those which had been burnt in contact with charcoal. Hence, observes M. Vicat, the contact of the charcoal had deranged the action which occurs between lime and clay in the ordinary mode of burning, and presents a phenomenon very difficult to explain. At first, it might be supposed that the iron required per-oxidation, before it would combine with the lime, and that the charcoal prevented this; but the experiments of M. Berthier prove that the iron is nearly passive in these and similar cases.—*Ann. de Chim.* xxiii. 424.

In addition to these experiments, it may be remarked, that M. Clement, whilst stating the occurrence of a substance in France fit for the fabrication of Roman cement, and which was discovered by M. Minard, gives an opinion formed by M. Minard, from many experiments, "that Roman cement owes its quality to a sub-carbonate of lime, produced by the action of fire on the natural carbonate."—*Ann. de Chim.* xxiv. 106.

FROM BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

SIX SONNETS ON THE SCENERY OF THE ESK.

Sonnet Dedicatory.

Although a hundred leagues of weary soil,
 Rivers, and plains, and mountains, stretch between,
 And years of gloom have pass'd, since we were seen
 On Esk's green banks, abroad at early toil;
 (What time ascending to the lucid skies
 The summer lark far up his singing shrouds,)
 Bidding upon the snowy sheet to rise
 The hills—the hamlets—and the morning clouds—
 Yet, Edward, deem not, 'mid a world of strife,
 That thoughts of early days can ever fade,
 Or late-found friendships overcast with shade
 The dear, the heartfelt joys of early life.
 Let then these trifles a memorial be
 To thy benignant heart, of Esk and me!

—
No. I.

A mountain child, 'mid Pentland's solitudes,
 Thou risest, murmuring Esk, and lapsing on,
 Between rude banks, o'er rock and mossy stone,
 Glitterest remote, where seldom step intrudes;
 Nor unremoved, as, with a broader tide,
 Thou windest through the glens of Woodhouselee,*
 Where 'mid the song of bird, the hum of bee,
 A bard with scenes Arcadian cloth'd thy side,
 The pastoral Ramsay.—Lofty woods embower
 Thy rocky bed 'mid Roslin's forest deep,
 Above whose top time-hallowed ruins peep
 Of castle and chapel;† yea, to this hour
 Grey Hawthornden looks downward from its steep,
 To tell of Drummond,‡ poesy's bright flower.

* It is here that the scenery of that inimitable pastoral, "The Gentle Shepherd," is placed. It has become, like the poetry of Tasso to the Italians, thoroughly national in Scotland, and in the best sense of the word, national. It is pleasing to find, that Campbell, in his *Specimens of the Poets*, stands forward in defence of this domestic drama, with a truly chivalrous ardour.—Embellished editions of this poem are frequent, and many paintings in reference to it have been made from the actual scenery.—"Habbie's How" has long been one of the favourite resorts for rural festivities, during the summer months, to the inhabitants of the metropolis.

† Castle and Chapel.

The Castle of Roslin is now almost in a state of entire ruin, only an apartment or two, at the upper part of the south-eastern extremity, being habitable.

The Chapel, so famous in the earlier poems of Scott, is still remarkably entire; and one of the principal curiosities in the county to which travellers resort.—See *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Forsyth's Beauties of Scotland*, and *Peter's Letters*, Vol. III.

‡ Grey Hawthornden.

A poetical license is here taken, the present house being an almost completely modernized one. In it are portraits of Drummond and Ben Jonson. For a conversation between these sages concerning the merits of many old English authors, *vide* the folio edition of *Drummond's Works*, page 224. It was for this conversation that the character of the poet of Hawthornden is so severely handled by Mr. Gifford, in his edition of the works of the "Rare Ben." For a fine dramatic sketch of the same, see Tim's *Magic Lantern*, No. VIII. in Vol. IV. of this Magazine. Wordsworth also visited Mr. Gillies amid the same scenery; and has left a fine sonnet commemorative of Roslin's faded grove."

No. II.

Not lovelier to the bard's enamour'd gaze,
 Winded Italian Mincio o'er its bed,
 By whispering reeds o'erhung!* when calmly led
 To meditate what rural life displays:
 Trees statelier do not canopy with gloom
 The brooks of Vallambrosa,† nor do flowers,
 Beneath Ausonia's sky, which seldom lowers,
 Empurple dark-eyed Brenta's‡ banks with bloom,
 Fairer than thine, romantic Esk, so bright
 Thou shin'st, a mirror for the cooing dove,
 That sidelong eyes its form with selfish love,
 Well pleased; 'mid blosmy furze, with bosom light,
 All day the linnet carols, and, from grove,
 The blackbird sings to thee at fall of night.

No. III.

Down from the gloomy forests of Dalkeith,
 Where majesty surrounds a ducal home,
 Between fresh corn-fields, gleaming, thou dost come;
 Bush, scaur, and rock, and hazelly shaw beneath:
 High tow'ring, 'mid its slopes of orchard ground,
 Stands Inveresk, with its proud villas fair;§
 Scotland's *Montpelier*, for salubrious air,
 And beauteous prospect, wide and far renown'd.—
 What else could be, since thou, with lapsing tide,
 Below dost murmur pleasantly, thy green
 And daisied banks outspread, where frequent seen,
 The browsing heifer shows her dappled side,
 And, 'mid the bloom-bright furze, are oft descried
 Anglers, that patient o'er thy mirror lean.

* By whispering reeds o'erhung—

Hic viridis tenera prætexit arundine ripas

Mincius.

MEL. *Bucolic.* vii.

† The brooks of Vallambrosa—

— Thick as autumnal leaves, that strew

The brooks of Vallambrosa.—

Paradise Lost.

‡ Empurple dark-eyed Brenta—

— Gently flows

The deep-dy'd Brenta.

Childe Harold, C. iv.

§ "Inveresk, with its proud villas fair," is beautifully situated on a little hill, on the northern border of the Esk; orchards and gardens stretching from behind the village, which is shaped like a half moon, to the slip of meadow ground, which borders the river. From the beauty of its situation, and the healthiness of the climate, it obtained of old the title of the *Montpelier* of Scotland.

This hill has been identified as the situation of a Roman colony, from numerous coins and relics of antiquity, which have at various times been dug up. About thirty years ago, a Roman bath was discovered almost entire. *Vid.* Sir John Sinclair.

During the civil wars, Oliver Cromwell used the Church of St. Michael, on this hill, as barracks for his cavalry; and threw up a mound in the churchyard, for commanding the mouth of the Esk by cannon. The mound is still entire. Not many years ago, a subterraneous magazine of gunpowder was discovered not far from the spot.

The bridge over the Esk is supposed to be of Roman construction; but no traces of its date are extant.

Three fields of battle are within three miles of Inveresk:—Carberry to the south; Pinkie immediately beneath it; and Prestonpans to the east.

No. IV.

Delightful 'tis, and soothing sweet, at eve,
 When sunlight, like a dream, hath pass'd away,
 O'er Pentland's far-off peaks, and shades of grey
 Around the landscape enviously weave;
 To stand upon this high walk, canopied,
 With stately lime-trees, forming gorgeous bowers;
 'Mid perfumes bland of honey-scented flowers;
 To gaze upon the fields out-stretching wide,
 To mark the distant hills of sombre hue,
 That range along the South, out-stretching far,
 And thee, translucent Esk, with face of blue,
 While, as enamour'd, the bright Evening star
 Looks on thy deeps, its loveliness to view.

No. V.

A beech tree spreads aloft its emerald boughs;
 And, on a couch of velvet moss beneath,
 I rest alone; the west wind's perfumed breath
 Sighs past, 'tis Summer's gentle evening close.
 Smooth Esk! above thy tide the insects weave,
 Mixing and meeting oft, their twilight dance,
 While o'er the crown of Arthur's Seat a glance
 Of crimson plays—the sunshine's glorious leave.
 The blackbird's voice hath died amid the wood,
 And all is still—Ah! what is human life?
 A lightning flash, the memory of a dream!
 Where are the joyful hearts that, by this stream,
 Sought fruits and wild-flowers, loud in boyhood's strife?
 There is no sound,—I muse in solitude!

No. VI.

How often, resting on this verdant sod,
 Have I, blue Esk, thy dimpling current viewed,
 Gliding serene, amid a solitude,
 As fair as e'er by human foot was trod!
 Here, o'er thy mirror, hangs the osier bough,
 Tall, lithe, and yellow, with its pointed leaves;
 There, in the shade, where prickly bramble weaves
 With the sloe-thorn, crow-flowers and harebells blow:
 Nor is thy wave unbroken by the leap
 Of speckled trout, what time the summer flies
 Hover in sportive dance, and cloudless skies
 O'erarch thy banks, with glory calm and deep;
 Whilst thou unmark'd art moving to the sea,
 Silent, like Time towards Eternity!

FROM THE EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

A WALK ROUND PARIS.

MR. EDITOR,—Let us take a walk, to-day, in the environs of Paris; if you please, we shall go round the Boulevards: it will require four good hours, but don't be alarmed, we shall have plenty of amusement. Suppose we begin here, at the Boulevard des Madelines. Aha! there comes my friend the flower-girl; she'll

attack you, being a stranger. "*Voilà, Monsieur!*" (how lovely that rose-bud is she is offering you!) "*voilà comme elle est belle!*" Say something to her, do. Shall I answer for you? "*Monsieur n'a pas de la monnaie.*" "*C'est égal.*" You see she has put it into your button-hole, whether you would or no—don't refuse her present—she knows her own interest. You have seen her pretty eyes, and red lips, and pearly teeth. Now, let us proceed. This Boulevard is not one of the most amusing, but it can boast an attraction of another kind. In that hotel opposite is the celebrated Magdalene of Canova. We cannot go to see it now, because, if we should, the walk must be given up for the day—hours are moments before it. It has a room appropriated to itself; a solemn drapery of deep grey falls from the centre of the roof, and hangs down the walls in classic folds,—the vulgar glare of day is excluded,—the Magdalene is sitting upon a pedestal of white marble, her head a little inclined to one side,—her eyes dejectedly and fixedly looking upon the cross of Christ, which lies upon her knees. Look at her from what side you will, it is the representation of deep grief. It is not in the face alone; go behind; go to any side; look at the neck; see the relaxation of muscle; cover it all but one arm, still it is grief—some say that the thumb alone expresses its character. In short, it is perfect. But let us pass on, we shall go to see it to-morrow. To-morrow is Friday, and it is only to be seen on Fridays. By the bye, there is another interesting thing visible only on Fridays—Mareschal Soult's collection of paintings of the Spanish school. No one who has not seen them can have a just idea of the glories of Murillo. There is a Prodigal Son, and a Christ healing the Sick, in which the conception is equal to the finest productions of the Italian schools: and one sees the Mareschal into the bargain, and talks with him too: only praise his pictures, and his hard face relaxes into smiles. But let us look about us. We are now entering upon the *Boulevard des Italiens*, the most fashionable of all the Boulevards, and one of the most amusing, rich in every variety of still and animated life. That building on the right hand is the Chinese Baths; it is there that the blooming virgin brides go to take what is called a *Bain Marié*. Its mysteries I cannot even guess at; and there, next to the Baths, is the Bazaar; but to any one who has seen the London one, it is a poor thing; but the whole Boulevard is a Bazaar, one continued fair, which is held all day, and every day. Let us stop a moment, to look at these prints: *La belle Suisse*, *La jeune Anglaise*, *La Coquette Espagnole*,—girls of all countries—Polonaise, Savoyarde, Autrichienne,—all pretty, but all the same: French smirk, French all over;—an inferior French artist can conceive nothing that is not French—*Le jugement de Paris*, *Leda*, *Flore et Zephyr*, *Le Matin*, *Le Soir*. What should we say were such prints publicly exhibited in England? not that there is any thing absolutely immoral in representations of nudity, but there is an indelicacy revolting to a certain state of

manners. It is counted for nothing in Paris, however. Is this the cause, or the result, of certain phenomena in French character, morals, and manners? The question is worth noticing. Observe how nicely the women are dressed; the colours a little gaudy, certainly: yellow, and orange, and crimson; but so well arranged, every thing fitted so sweetly, the hats so prettily coquettish, the feet so like Sir John Suckling's pretty brides, which, "like little mice, went in and out," the waist so taper, the robe so beautifully fitted to the form, that I can hardly resist the temptation of gently encircling it with one "happy arm," and whispering a thousand gallant things in the ear. How true is that song of Gay's!

When the heart of a man is oppress'd with care,
The mist is dispell'd when a woman appears,
Like the notes of a fiddle, she sweetly, sweetly
Raises the spirits, and charms our ears.

Who is there that has not felt this? There is a dance of the spirits, a flutter of the heart, a momentary oblivion of all that annoys us, when one lifts the eyes to gaze upon women, even though it be but to catch the momentary flash of eyes "dark as night," or the milder beam of the eloquent blue. How often, when whirling rapidly along, on a journey of anxiety and sorrow, when the heart has been heavy, and the eyes hardly conscious of passing objects—how often has a fair face, with braided hair, and morning smile, peeping from a casement, dispelled, for a moment, all anxiety, fixed the vacant eye, and sent to the heart a thrill of pleasure, alas! too sweet, because too fleeting! But we are getting sentimental; that won't do; here is the "*Passage des Panoramas*;" let us put sentiment to flight, by going to Madame Felix's, and eating patés, or rice-cakes. This is not equal to Burlington Arcade, but it is not amiss neither. The shops are pretty, and the girls within them prettier still: believe me, business does not thrive the worse for that; it is a little innocent secret the French possess: but here is Felix's! Oh, never fear! we shall edge in gradually; let us endeavour to reach the hot oven. Are they not excellent? only taste one of those; but make despatch, else we shall lose our places, for new candidates press on. Thirty-two sols! very dear, but very good. Now, let us continue our walk; this is the Boulevard de Frescati, a name well known to many unfortunate gentlemen; and that long balcony above is where the unhappy and the guilty walk, to calm the agitation of their spirits, and cool their burning brains; and where the fortunate come to count over their ill-gotten and unlooked-for gains. And now we are just entering upon the *Boulevard de Montmartre*. What regiments of books, and how cheap, and what a strange system of arrangement—whole ranks and rows, at one franc the volume, at ten sols the volume, nay, at five sols! One would suppose the French a reading people, from the number of these exhibitions of books; they are certainly buyers of books, whether they be readers of them or no. What a charming promenade this is! There is nothing like it any where.

Length, and breadth, and air, and shade; and all sorts of exhibitions; prints and porcelain; fruits and flowers; jewellery and jugglery; pretty gewgaws, and pretty girls. Look this way, look that way, look what way you will, and you never look on vacancy. The bazaars of Bagdad and Bassora, in the reigns of Haroun Alraschid, and his successors, were a joke to it. Here is the Porte of St. Denis, a fine thing enough: but let us stop a moment; look there, just at the corner of the Rue de St. Denis—you have often seen wax figures in imitation of living ones, but here we have the thing reversed. You perceive the boy is quite motionless; look well at the eye; it never twinkles, and the extended arm never quivers. Till I had seen the figure leap from the pedestal and talk, no assurance could have convinced me that it could be any thing but wax. But you must take my assurance, however, for it may stand thus for half an hour yet. Do you perceive that little stall on the right hand? Yes, that where the little old man is cutting slices of cake and pudding, and cannot cut fast enough for the demand. He has married three daughters, and given each of them 100,000 francs. I have heard that he cut, at an average, five sols' worth every minute, which, reckoning twelve hours a-day, gives 65,700 francs, or 2628*l.* per annum. I have often stood and watched him, and never saw him a moment idle, so that I should think the calculation considerably under the mark. I assure you his goods justify the demand for them. Now, we have left fashion quite behind us, but none of the Boulevards are more amusing than the *Boulevard du Temple*. On this side, where you perceive that terrace with vases, is the *Jardin des Tuiles*; it is crowded on Sunday, and holiday evenings, with the Bourgeois, and their wives and families, where they go to lose themselves in the labyrinth for the hundredth time. And on the other side of the Boulevard, just opposite to us, are various exhibitions for young children, and old children too; for indeed all the French are old children; there is hardly any age at which it becomes ridiculous in France to join in childish amusements; the round-about, and swings, and puppet shows, are almost equally patronized by the old and by the young. But this is not the hour for seeing these things; we must return some evening, when all that semicircle is lighted up; it produces a splendid effect. Do you see that elderly woman approaching us, and the young girl with her; she is the supposed *bonne*, and that is her *protégé*. She is a lovely girl, is she not? and has all the semblance of modesty: alas! alas! it is no more. The time has been, and seemingly not long since, when she was that which she seems. That respectable-looking woman was probably her first seducer. Infamous! infamous traffic! We are now approaching the site of the Bastile; look on the right hand, do you perceive these granaries? they are erected precisely on its site. Come along, we have a great way to walk yet; but no wonder you stand gazing; ay, it was the things witnessed by the walls that once stood there, and but guessed at beyond them,

which first prompted this eventful question, "*Are men like a flock of sheep, to be inherited, to pass from one master to another?*" A question, whose answer was vengeance and anarchy, and blood and crime, but which might have been peace and joy, and mutual rights, and just subordination. But let us turn from this to the other side; that is, or rather is to be, the Fountain of Elephants. Beneath that large wooden house, they are erecting a huge animal of that species, which, when finished, may be wonderful, but cannot certainly be beautiful. It is surprising that the French, with their admitted good taste, should patronize such loathsome monsters as spout water out of their mouths. Nothing can be in more detestable taste. It can be tolerable only to an apothecary, or a sick-nurse. We must now cross the river; this is the Pont D'Austerlitz; the Austrians wished to blow it up when they came to Paris, but they were overruled by the greater magnanimity of the Emperor Alexander. It was the same thing with regard to the Pont de Jena; but the King of France, *as is said*, sent a very spirited message to Blucher upon the occasion; he desired to know at what hour it was intended to blow it up, as he meant to sit upon one end of it. Now, we are just *vis-à-vis* the *Jardin des Plantes*, a most charming place it is, but it is out of the line of our walk, for we shall still follow the Boulevards. There is nothing very interesting here, so, if you please, we'll walk a little faster * * * * We are now getting towards the Boulevard du Mont Parnasse. You perceive what numbers of the lower orders are flocking from all points, in one direction; all pressing to Mont Parnasse, where there is a little of every thing. Here is the barrier, and beyond this all is fun and frolic. Every one who wishes to see the lower orders of Paris in perfection should come here. Is it not a perfect exhibition of its kind? Only look there! I am sure there are 500 people under these trees feasting. What is it they are eating?—all the same thing—some kind of stew, I think. Observe how they *lick up* the overabundant sauce with their bread, cramming it down their throats, and sending huge draughts of weak sour *vin de Bourgogne* after it. For Heaven's sake look at this group dancing; were ever such figures seen dancing a quadrille! how this would humble the pride of many English and Scotch misses, who associate nothing with quadrilles but the grace and elegance of Parisian society the most *distingué*! What would they say to this? It would bring the Hay-makers and the Country-bumpkin into fashion again. Only look at that quadriller without the neckcloth, his face and hands sooty and shining; his "jacket and his trowsers blue" have seen better days. Good God! how they are patched! But we must go on, or else we shall be too late. How beautiful the gilded dome of the Invalides looks through the trees, when the sun is low, as it is now, and casting his yellow beams upon it! Perhaps you may never have heard the occasion upon which it was gilded. When Napoleon returned from Russia, there were a great many grumblers, and one of his courtiers had the courage to tell

him so. "Gild the dome of the Invalides," said he. In giving this order, he showed his usual knowledge of French character; for a few days nothing was talked of but the gilded dome of the Invalides. Russia was forgotten, and Napoleon only mentioned as the beautifier of Paris—*la première ville du monde*, as the French always designate it. This is a very delightful Boulevard, the *Boulevard des Invalides*. We have not time at present to see the Hospital, but it is well worth the while; there is a great deal of interest about it, however, without going in. How delightful it is to see these old wounded soldiers sitting on these benches, enjoying the sunshine, and talking over old hardships and present comforts! How happy these others seem to be within those beautiful enclosures, trimming the shrubs and watering the flower-plats! One need hardly inquire, in France, who was the founder of such and such institutions;—with all his faults, and they were many, it was Louis Quatorze who did every thing. This, however, has been much improved in its arrangements, both as to comfort and splendour, by the Empress *Marie Louise*. Do you perceive, now, where we are?—we are almost where we set out from. We are now on the *Pont de la Revolution*; over the houses, there, is the top of the celebrated column of the *Place Vendôme*, encased in bronze, made of the cannon taken at Austerlitz and Jena. There was a statue of Napoleon on the top of it; and when the restoration of the Bourbons took place, it was, of course, removed. It was meant to be a sort of triumph over the fallen dynasty, and accordingly ropes were attached to the statue, and men hired to pull it down; but, after many essays, the attempt was found to be ineffectual. The succeeding night, workmen were secretly sent to the summit to weaken the legs, by partly filing them; and again, the next day, it was determined to consummate the triumph; but still the filed legs of the Emperor were too strong for the efforts of the legitimists, and the ropes broke. The idea of a public spectacle was then given up, through the milder policy of the Emperor Alexander, and workmen were again employed to finish the filing, and to remove it privately. Numbers of the Emperor's admirers slept on the pavement all night, to have the melancholy satisfaction of a last contemplation of their idol; and about five in the morning, notwithstanding that the square was by that time thronged with multitudes, (making public the act which was intended to be private,) and notwithstanding that the Emperor was then an outcast and a wanderer, and the Bourbon, King every inch of him, no shout of brutal triumph, over fallen greatness, arose from the multitude, when the statue of Napoleon was lowered to the ground, and the white flag raised to crown that column, which, let the flag of the Bourbon float over it as it may, will ever be as imperishable a record of Napoleon's triumphs as of his fall;—and now we have reached another of Napoleon's monuments, the unfinished Church of the Made-

lines; and this is where we set out from. I hope the walk has given you some amusement; I know it has given me a good appetite;—so I propose an immediate adjournment to Mrs. Dun's.

H.

FROM THE JOURNAL OF SCIENCE.

DRY ROT.

WE have been favoured by Mr. Baker of Hamstead, with some valuable observations on the above subject, which want of room prevents our publishing in detail. He adduces a number of instances, in which the following application effectually prevented the disease, and cured it where it had made considerable ravages.

Take two ounces of white arsenic in powder, dissolve it by boiling in one gallon of soft water; if boiled in an iron or tinned vessel, add half an ounce of copper filings, but if in an untinned copper vessel the filings are not necessary; to a quart of size and half a pound of common tar, add a small quantity of fresh-slaked stone-lime, sifted pretty fine, beat them well into a paste, which should be then nicely dissolved with the above solution, gradually adding during the process (by small portions,) as much more of the pulverized lime as will give the whole a proper (rather diluted) body, to be laid on with a painter's brush. New work when finished as a preventive should be dressed with the composition, at least twice after well drying the first coat; old work as a curative when removed and repaired, (such as diseased wainscott) should be perfectly dried by exposition to the air, and then well dressed on its back before it is returned to its place.

Use of Sugar as an Antidote to Lead in Cases of Poisoning.

The following fact has been stated by M. Reynard to the Société des Sciences of Lisle. During the campaign of Russia several loaves of sugar had been enclosed in a chest containing some flasks of extract of lead. One of these flasks having been broken, the liquid escaped, and the sugar became impregnated with it. During the distresses of the campaign it was necessary to have recourse to this sugar; but far from producing the fatal results which were expected, the sugar formed a salutary article of nourishment to those who made use of it, and gave them a degree of vigour and activity which was of the greatest service in enabling them to support the fatigues of marching. Hence M. Reynard thinks that sugar might be adopted for preventing the effects of subacetate of lead, instead of the sulphates of soda, and of magnesia, which are not always at hand.—*Med. Rep.* xx. 441; or *Journal d'Agriculture, &c.*

Periodical Thunder Storms.

Mr. Ronalds has quoted the curious remarks of Volta on the reappearance of thunder storms for many days together, at the same

hour and in the same place. "It is necessary to inhabit a mountainous country, and particularly the neighbourhood of lakes, such as Como, the precincts of Lario, Verbano, Varese, Lugano, Lecco, and the whole mountains of Bianca, Bergama, &c., in order to be convinced of such periods and fixations (so to speak) of thunder storms at this or that valley or opening of a mountain, which last until some wind or remarkable change in the atmosphere shall occur to destroy them." Volta ascribes the effect to a state of the atmosphere produced by the storms of the preceding day.

FROM BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

MODERN DRAMAS, AND DRAMATIC WRITERS.

WHENEVER a new play is damned at either of our great theatres, and that is the case, (or ought to be,) nine times in ten that a new play is produced, we are sure to have a homily from a certain class of critics about "The decline of the national drama."

If by this "decline of the national drama," nothing more was meant to be conveyed than that our dramatic novelties (number and value) have ranked low within the last thirty years, that is a statement which I should not contradict; but the principle meant to be asserted is this,—that the *power* of dramatic writing has declined in England during the last half century; and that decline, (if it exists at all,) seems to me to be very much exaggerated.

It will be admitted, and perhaps even by that enlightened class of disputants, who are content to perceive effects without embarrassing themselves as to causes, that, if the force of our dramatic composition has abated at the present day, that style of writing is the only one in which we fail.

Byron, and Moore, and Scott, and Coleridge,—Wordsworth, Southey, Shelley, and Crabbe,—Milman, Wilson, and twenty others, whose names I only omit because my list is strong enough without them,—these are writers, I think, to challenge rank with the very first poets of the sixteenth century; and in that delightful species of composition, second only to poetry, I mean in the construction of prose romances and novels, what have we up to the present period, take away alone Defoe, to set against Smollett, Fielding, Richardson, and the author (whoever he may be) of *Waverley*?

To the drama, however; and, first, to the composition of Tragedy.

Shakspeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, Ford, and the dramatists, in general, of the days of Elizabeth and James—(men whose powers no human creature can be readier than I am to admit); since these writers are so held up *in terrorem*, against modern dramatic adventurers, let us see in what manner modern dramatic taste treats their productions. So loftily as the plays of

this school are commended, and so universally as they are read, is it not strange, (if they be, as plays, so excellent) that so few of them are in course of acting?

We can't lay the blame here upon the bad taste of managers. Their taste is bad enough in general, Heaven knows; but, as regards the old authors, managers have not been to blame. They have submitted to have the force of the old dramas made apparent to them; they have tried the revival of them over and over again; and yet, in spite of their repeated endeavours, not a single tragedy of Beaumont and Fletcher's has been able to keep the stage; and even Shakspeare—the exception to the poets of his day—even Shakspeare lives only so altered and refashioned, that scarce half the tragedies now acted under his name, could be recognised for those which he originally composed.

It is pleasant to talk of the “presumptuous interpolations,” or of the “absurd alterations,” of Tate, Dryden, and Cibber; but it is under the versions of those writers (presumptuous though they be) that one half the tragedies of Shakspeare are applauded at the present day. We are bored to death about the “superiority” of the plays “in their original shape;” why are not the plays, in their original shape, performed? I do not speak of preserving precisely the old text, or of giving such passages, as, from their coarseness, modern refinement would revolt at; but the plays as (in the main) they were originally written; with the original plots, the original dialogues, characters, action, and arrangement; and since the plays, in this shape, are so surpassingly admirable, why is it, I ask again, that, in this shape, they are not acted?

Hamlet, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, and *Julius Cæsar*, are the only (popular) tragedies of Shakspeare which are played with any approach to the original reading. Shakspeare's *Richard the Third*, is no more like the *Richard the Third* now acted, than Massinger's *Fatal Dowry* is like the *Fair Penitent* of Rowe. *Henry the Eighth*, and *King Lear*, have suffered as much change almost as *Richard the Third*. *The Tempest* is any thing (as it is acted) but Shakspeare's play; and great liberties have been taken with both *Romeo and Juliet* and *Coriolanus*. And the alterations in these plays are not confined to alterations of the text. They do not stop at the exclusion of offensive passages from the dialogue, nor even at changes in the business and interest of the piece. Whole scenes—nay, almost whole acts—are frequently struck out, and replaced either with matter entirely new, or with matter transferred from some other of the author's productions. Plots are altered—incidents are omitted—characters are changed, or added, or subtracted; and half the tragedies, in short, as I have said before, now acted as the plays of Shakspeare, are little more, at the best, than Shakspeare's conceptions, put into shape for the modern market, by men of practical knowledge and ability.

The truth is—no disparagement to Shakspeare, or his contempo-

rarities—that it was easier to write a successful play in their time, than it is in ours. The audiences of the sixteenth century, although alive to excellence, and eager of it, were less fastidious in their criticism than ours of the year 1823. Along with a certain quantity of that which was admirable, they would accept of a good deal which was weak or absurd.

Look through the productions, generally, of our dramatists of the Golden Age. Three-fourths of their plays abound in beauties; but scarce one in twenty is complete. We find instance upon instance, through volume after volume, of two or perhaps three acts of lively fable and spirited writing in a play, rendered wholly unavailable by the monstrosity of the matter that follows. In fact, the difficulty, two hundred years ago, lay where the difficulty lies now—not in the opening, but in the finishing of a work. Half our modern novelists—and I speak of the best of them—break down (the fact is notorious) in their catastrophe. “Sketches,” “Remembrances”—“Fragments”—“Wayside Conversations,”—every form of publication which can enable the author to begin, without considering in what manner he shall finish—is grasped at eagerly by the lighter writers of the present day.

But though such tales, “signifying nothing,” pass muster in the closet, yet they will not, in these fine times, do upon the stage. Our theatrical audiences now *will* have their *reasonable solution*; that *desideratum* which the audiences of the sixteenth century were always contented to forego. The old writers sat down with all nature open to them for material; they wrote themselves, hand over head—right on—into a difficulty; and cut the knot without scruple, whenever they were unable to untie it. With them, to use a phrase of familiar illustration, “all was fish that came to net.” They had no nicety about the choice of a subject—they were bound to no regularity in the arrangement of a plot—they cared little about maintaining interest, and nothing about keeping up consistency, from the beginning to the end of a five act drama—they gave four or five dialogues of exquisite poetry—four or five situations (such as, by the way, we must not give now)—and, when so much was accomplished, their task was complete.

There is this essential difference between an old tragedy and a tragedy of the present day, that the one was a work merely of genius; the other must be the work of genius combined with art. Your modern dramatist must not only produce the diamond, and polish it, but he must set it, and set it, too, according to a given form and fashion. He is limited, first, as to the length of his piece; very much limited indeed as to the choice of his subject; and, what is more, his fable must arrive at a consistent—reasonable—termination. Give him excellence to his heart’s content through the first four acts of his play; and yet one good round absurdity in the fifth act shall defeat him. He may be feeble,—trite—trashy; still, so that he keep his way evenly, he may hope to pass muster; but let him commit a single thumping *non sequitur*, (and our

golden dramatists generally committed about two in every act)—let him break course only once, and his ruin is inevitable.

I cannot doubt that there are poets, and many to be found at the present day, who could produce in abundance, the same irregular kind of drama which passed current in the days of Massinger and Fletcher; but these men will not endure the drudgery of writing plays to suit the strictness of modern fashion, when they may attain fame and fortune (far greater) by twenty roads less rugged. The rule and compass is, in any shape, so abhorrent to genius. It is so much more delightful to write a book like "*Beppo*" or "*Don Juan*," where a man puts down every thing that comes uppermost, and writes carelessly forward. Take notice, for instance, whether almost all our modern acting tragedies are not written by men of comparatively slight poetic faculty? Byron, indeed, has produced dramatic poems, (and very dull things dramatic poems commonly are;) but I can scarcely think that Byron wrote with any view to representation on the stage. Coleridge wrote one tragedy,—and an excellent good one, although he was unfortunate in the acting of it,—Kean's acting would make it tell;—but Coleridge is almost the only *poet* who has lately written for the stage. Maturin's *Bertram* was effective; but Maturin cannot write verse. And, again, with a vast deal of energy and imagination, Maturin has so much of the wildness and irregularity of the sixteenth century school about him, that his plays, since *Bertram*, have not been successful. Indeed, it stands, I think, past all question, that the mass of men who now write for the stage, are of those who (from whatever cause) have not found the more profitable fields of composition open to them.

It would extend this article to a length beyond the limits of a magazine, if I were to point out even a few instances of the laxity in which our earlier dramatists indulged, and of the advantages which, even independent of their irregularity, they possessed over the modern writers; but there are two propositions which I may lay down, I think, without fear of contradiction:—such tragedies as those of Beaumont and Fletcher, (and the other authors of their school,) if they could be written now by libraries, would be of no value to the stage;—and such tragedies as are demanded by the taste of the present day, those authors probably *would* not, and perhaps could not, have produced.

But if the altered tone and taste of society in the modern day, may account for some apparent abatement in the force of our English tragedy, that same change, as regards comedy, will be found to operate with still greater force.

Those great natural sources of subject, which supplied material to the old writers;—which were drawn upon first by Fletcher and Massinger, afterwards by Dryden, then by Shadwell, and, still later, by the school of Congreve, Wycherley, and Farquhar;—of those sources, scarcely one is left to the dramatist of the present day. A freedom from all restraints, of morality, or even of decency, was

the birthright, if I may so express myself, of a poet of the sixteenth century. His free license was the soul of every thing he did. Vice furnished his plot; vice pointed his dialogue; vice was in his characters—in his interest—in his wit. He lashed vice, sometimes, it is true; but, even in lashing, he paraded it. Even where he affected to give a moral tone to a play, his morality was always reserved for some absurd recantation in the last scene;—he exhibited the sin, and lived upon it, through four acts and a half of his piece, and protested against it in the *denouement*, when he wanted it no longer.

I will not say whether this course should, or should not, be forbidden; but I say, that it *is* forbidden upon the stage at the present day. Few of the older comedies—few indeed of the date of Congreve or Farquhar—are acted now. The few that do still keep the stage, may be said to linger rather than to live. They are acted more and more rarely from season to season; when acted, they are barely endured; and they will shortly be acted no longer.

To wonder that similar plays are not written, when, if they were written, no theatre could dare to produce them, is as absurd as to expect that a modern comic poet, cramped as he is, and shackled, at every corner and on every hand, should produce the same free, bold, dashing, daring picture, which the old artist painted, whose pencil moved at liberty.

If the appeal to any passion—no matter what—is to be cut off, a certain quantity of excitation, and consequently of interest, must be lost. Vice, even where it offends, almost constantly merits attention. A fire—an execution—a public riot—these are sights which give birth only to painful sensations; and yet multitudes flock, even at personal risk, to gaze upon them. The same disposition may be found existing in all times and in all places. Murder, in ancient Rome, was a popular *spectacle*. The Spanish *auto da fe* interested hundreds, who cared for the preservation of the faith not a farthing. A boxing-match, a bull-bait, a theft, or an accident in the street,—the smallest of these incidents, will attract a crowd of spectators in London now. In short, that which is uncommon, and especially that which is in any way *forbidden*, will always be attractive to the great mass of human kind. No one cares to see that done which may be done with impunity by every body. Who ever thought of going to look at a grocer selling figs?—but a thief draws a crowd around him, because he is the exception to the common rule. Three-fourths of the charm in the comedy of our old dramatists, lie in their development of those matters which it is used to conceal. Half the point (even of the dialogue) of Farquhar and Wycherley, lies in their constant popping out of bold sentiments and unexpected truths. All their heroes are, to the multitude, exquisite fellows to be amused with;—they are so eternally saying that out, which common people only venture to think.

We are told, that our modern comedy is weak, and flimsy and farcical, that it shows the pertness of soda water, rather than the spirit of champagne. I take that simile readily, for it suits my own

purpose:—Soda water, rather than champagne, is the drink of the present day. There is a want of *stamina*, it is said, about our modern writers of comedy. How is it possible for a man to intoxicate us, if we will drink nothing stronger than milk and water? How shall the modern comedy writer display a vigour, if he has it? In what form—in what style of dramatic character—shall he embody his strong conception? The lady cannot (now-a-days) speak her mind freely—the lover (of the drama) must set bounds to his passion—The honest gentleman, time out of mind, has been notoriously a dead weight upon the stage;—and from the “gay bold-faced villain,” who was the life of all our old comedy, the dramatist of the modern day is entirely shut out. Into the *depths* of the human heart, the dramatist is now forbidden to penetrate. He has the *aperies* of fashion to work upon, instead of the propensities of nature. He may burlesque, if he can, the follies and fopperies of society; but he must not give the drama that interest which it held in the hands of his predecessors, by either exhibiting or chastising the real vices of mankind.

I know I shall be told that, subject to all these checks, comedies have been produced—and sterling comedies—within the last few years. I admit the fact, and it forms part of my argument. If the authors of those comedies quoted have done so much under restraint, how much more would they not have accomplished, if the field had been open to them? Sterling comedies have been produced, but how few they are in number! The fact is, that, under modern restrictions, the labour of production is too great. There is so little variety of subject left, that effective comedies cannot be numerous. For the last ten years, I believe, nothing like genteel comedy (and perhaps genteel comedy is the only sterling comedy,) nothing in the shape of genteel comedy has appeared at all.

I say again, that the labour of production now is too great. In Fletcher's vein, or Farquhar's, a man would run on for ever. The mere *esprit* of their characters, and the force of their situations, would do sufficient alone to carry a play through. But what a different principle of producing effect do we see at work in the School for Scandal! There is more labouring of points, more expenditure of epigram, in that single play, than would have sufficed for sixteen comedies of Shirley, Massinger, or Fletcher. And, after all, the reliance of the piece is upon a display of art, rather than a display of nature. There is epigram in abundance in every scene, but very little of that *gaieté de cœur* which charms us in the older writers, and which was a quality (unlike epigram) inexhaustible where it existed. No one would suppose the School for Scandal to have been written in three weeks, or a month, under the influence of claret half the time, and of exuberant animal spirits the other half. In fact, the reign of genteel comedy is pretty nearly at an end. The force of a play now has changed its former bearing. Clowns and coxcombs were minor personages with the older writers—the gentleman was the author's organ for the diffusion of jest and

gaiety. But the point of honour now has passed into other hands; the gentleman is but an appendage to carry on the plot of the piece, and the author's reliance is upon some tailor—some Jew with a humped back—some fop—some Frenchman, or other ridiculous personage, who may be pushed through a series of farcical dilemmas, and whose mishaps (not his triumphs) are to form the amusement of the audience.

And the older writers, both of tragedy and comedy, beside that irregularity in which they were indulged as to plot—beside that appeal to one particular source of sympathy which gave them sure means of effect whenever a woman was on the stage—besides this, they selected such subjects, and such incidents, for their plays, as could not fail to produce strong interest; and upon that interest almost alone they often depended for their success. The great object (in the school of Fletcher) was to throw the hero, or heroine, into such a situation as must, of itself, excite attention. How the party was to be got into that situation, or how he was to be got out of it again, were minor considerations, or rather no considerations whatever.

Without quoting extreme examples, like the *Unnatural Combat* of Massinger, the *Woman Hater* of Fletcher, or the *'Tis pity she's a Whore* of Ford—without referring to instances so monstrous as these, there are examples to be met with at every step in the writings of the sixteenth century, of those *certainly* effective situations to which I now advert. Shirley, in one of his plays, makes a young lady of rank entrust a secret of vital importance to the servant of her father, and the villain afterwards forces her to yield up her chastity, on pain of having this secret discovered. Now the whole structure of this play of Shirley's is of the clumsiest description, but it was evident to the author, that he might depend upon a very strong interest in those scenes where the treacherous servant bends his mistress to his purpose.

Again, in the *Maid's Tragedy* of Beaumont and Fletcher, a young nobleman having married *Evadne*, to whom he is devotedly attached, is told by her (*ceteris paribus*) in her chamber, on her wedding night, that she despises him, and that she has only submitted to marry him, in order to cloak her intrigue with somebody else.

In the more modern play of *The Mysterious Mother*, the manner in which *the Countess* falls in love with her son is most ingeniously contrived, and it is impossible not to be carried forward, to a certain degree, by such an event; but still the interest here, as in the two former plays, is interest upon which modern feeling will not suffer a play to turn.

In comedy, take the point of Shirley's excellent play, *The Gamester*, where the husband believes, that, by a series of contrivances, he has unwittingly become accessory to his own dishonour. The scenes between Wilding and his wife, while he is under this belief, are spirited (and can hardly fail to be so) in a very high de-

gree; but the whole matter is such as the stage, now, cannot talk about.

So, again, in another of our old Dramas, where an old law is supposed to be discovered, which condemns all people to die at forty, the anxiety of heirs—the searching of church-books for registers—and the seizure (personal) upon grandfathers, great-uncles, and elderly ladies—all this is very laughable in the reading, but it would not do now for stage representation.

For, among those inclinations inseparable from our nature, which the usages of society compel us to conceal or deny, is the propensity to laugh sometimes at the misfortunes of our fellow creatures. I will not admit this disposition to be, *per se*, any argument of evil feeling; for I am convinced that there are circumstances under which the best regulated mind might be disposed to laugh even at the commission of a wrong.

Sultan Selim, for instance, goes the other day to put out a great fire in Constantinople, and, seeing the firemen backward to face the danger, orders three to be thrown into the flames by way of encouragement to the rest. This act is atrocious, but we laugh (I think) notwithstanding.

Again, the story of the monkey at Bartholomew fair—A showman of wild beasts has his booth enclosed with canvas, but a boy takes advantage of a nook in the cloth, and peeps from time to time at the exhibition for nothing. A monkey within (piqued, probably, at being beheld *gratis*) watches his opportunity with the felonious peeper; and, when he peeps again, pokes a skewer into his eye. Now, one does not exult a jot here in the suffering of the boy, but one would purchase such a monkey, and adopt him as one's son.

And, without multiplying cases in which the older writers, both of comedy and tragedy, have dwelt upon matters forbidden to the stage at the present day, I think it will be obvious that (except only perhaps Shakspeare) they all of them have taken that course, and more or less, succeeded in it. Shakspeare, certainly, whatever his irregularities or excrescences, did not, upon principle, always take the easiest path to effect; and the consequence is, that there is almost the same difference between his plays and those of his contemporaries, as there is between the poem of Don Juan, and the novels of the Author of Waverley, whose most singular attribute perhaps is, that he constantly contrives interest without touching upon the more unseemly passions of mankind; and that there is not a line, (at least I don't recollect one,) from the beginning to the end of his works, which might not be read aloud in a circle of ladies, without exciting an unpleasant emotion.

Admitting, as who can question it, the splendid genius of the old writers—admitting that their plays are, for any but stage purposes, so superior to our modern trifles as to admit of no comparison with them, still, I think, that it was to the subjects which they were allowed to select, and to the freedom with which they

were permitted to write, more than to any general superiority in talent over the moderns, that they were indebted for the vigour, and above all, for the fertility, of their pens. Nature, in all her shapes, must be powerful; and from nature, in any shape, they were allowed to paint. Where they have condescended to describe humours and fashions, it must be remembered, that we now look at such descriptions as curious from their antiquity. An antick of the day of James the First, or Charles the Second, will excite interest with those who pass over a modern coxcomb with contempt.

I cannot believe but that either the author of *Don Juan*, or the author of *Anastasius*, could produce, with ease, the same irregular fancies which succeeded, as plays, with Fletcher and with Massinger. I cannot help thinking, that the author of *Waverley* might write historical plays with admirable effect, if he would devote his attention to such a style of writing; but I believe that he gets too much, both of fame and money, by his novels, to be tempted to adventure on a less certain and less profitable pursuit.

And I think, to go farther, that even those who do write for the stage, changed as it is—for I maintain that the change is in the stage, and not in the power of writing for it—I think that even *some* of these, judging by what they have produced in their trammels, might have brought forth pieces not unworthy of at least the second class of writers of the 16th century, if they had enjoyed the same advantages which those earlier writers possessed.—This *some* being understood as distinctly excluding those gentlemen who assist our patent managers in making the public taste even worse than it need be; and who are content to act, either by the year or by the piece, as *illustrators* to the work of the decorator and the machinist.

TITUS.

FROM THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

RIVER RUSHES.

To the Editor of the London Monthly Magazine.

SIR—An acquaintance of mine, who lives in the vicinity of the Ouse—a river immortalized by the pensive Cowper,—whose waters, he says, are thickly interspersed with those wasteful ornaments, rushes, wishes me to inform the public of the method whereby they may be advantageously procured for the purposes I have described them (in a former number,) as being well calculated for bedding for horses, cattle, pigs, &c. and for which, I assert, they are much better adapted than bruised gorse, and other stubborn substances, which are used in places where straw is both scarce and dear. He says justly, that in some depths of rivers, where pools are formed, and in other places, that rushes grow entirely under the surface, and considers any attempt to detach them from these deep aquatic beds to be a task both of difficulty and danger. I

can assure him his surmises are wrong: the process is simple, easy, and safe; a lad stands on each side a punt-boat, while another lad keeps it steady, or moves it, as occasion requires. They are both furnished with a cutter, an instrument similar in shape, but smaller, than a common digging spade, and which is attached to the end of a slight firm pole, whose length is proportioned to the depth of the river where this operation is required; and it is surprising to see with what ease the different floating masses are detached from their roots, and rise therefrom to the river's surface. The time chosen for this branch of exercise is when the tide is receding, and in a direction towards the mill-head, round which the various drifted heaps form one collection, and are thence drawn out by rakes, and afterwards left to exhale their moisture in the sun.

What tons of loads of rushes does the Severn, the Thames, the Medway, the Trent, alone individually contain! and, however Vandal-like may appear such an infringement as I recommend upon the ancient domains frequented by such choice masters as Collins, Gray, and other votaries of the lyre, I readily acquit myself on this score, that national property will become, according to the extent of its adoption, more or less enhanced; besides, those now inaccessible and intolerable retreats for toads, water-newts, efts, and gluttonous birds, such as bitterns, herons, and other devastating creatures, in addition to those mischievous animals I have before specified, will become nearly extirpated, and the sun will, in such a case, smile pleasantly upon those now "hidden waters."

Mr. Alexander Moody, of Hawley-mills, is the gentleman who has the merit of bringing water-rushes into practical use, and I wish to see the experiment more extensively tried.

FROM THE SAME.

SAGACITY AND RAPACITY OF WATER-RATS.

NATURE certainly shows less wisdom in some parts of her management for the preservation of species than in others: let the following fact suffice. That species of water-fowl called moor-hen is, during the progress of incubation, in the habit of uttering a frequent and plaintive cry, which is pleasing, though mournful: this note serves to betray the otherwise attentive bird into the hands of sauntering boys, who are wandering on the sedge banks of rivers which they haunt, and where their nests are invariably found. It likewise tends to draw the attention of its direst enemy, that keen sporting animal the water-rat; than whom there is not a more active rapacious "hunter of prey," throughout the domains of every river. During the many hours I have sat silent on the banks of the Darent, which is an asylum for thousands of these noxious animals, I have seen them repeatedly, on hearing

the moor-hen's pitiful plaint from her nest, dash immediately into the water from the opposite side, and, swimming across to the spot, immediately dart into the nest, and, having scared the mother from her eggs or brood, would either devour the former by sucking them on the spot, or, seizing hold of a young bird in its mouth, would replunge with it into the water, and carry it across, to be devoured in its own nest. The otter himself is not more bold, quick, or rapacious, than this spirited animal: he will frequently dive and bring up small fish, such as gudgeons, minnows, fry, &c. and quite in a manner similar to the "water-dog," the otter himself. None of the watery tribe, not even the largest trout, as he swims across, dare attack him, except the largest species of pike, who proves an overmatch for him, and draws him, after a short struggle, a shrieking victim, into the watery gulf, where suffocation precludes the exercise of his natural powers and courage. It is not uncommon, in opening a large-sized pike, to find one, or sometimes two, water-rats in his maw; and these fish certainly do good in large pools, ponds, and rivers, by diminishing the race of such depredators as water-rats; for, although their natural propensities cause them to prefer any spot where water is, to other places, they are great depredators of all field produce, and their disposition for eating is almost unceasing.

E. S.

Banks of the Darent, Nov. 17, 1823.

FROM THE NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

The Fall of Constantinople, a Poem; with a Preface, animadverting in detail on the unprecedented Conduct of the Royal Society of Literature towards the Candidates for the three premiums that it deliberately proposed and subsequently withdrew: to which are added, Parga, the Iphigenia of Timanthes, Palmyra, Eminch's Death, and other Poems. By Jacob Jones, jun. of the Inner Temple, and late of Brazen-nose College, Oxford. Svo.

WE notice the present volume principally on account of the preface it contains; in which Mr. Jacob Jones has made what Capt. Dugald Dalgettie would call "*an onslaught*" upon the Royal Society of Literature. It appears that Mr. J. J., allured by the costly prizes promised by the R.S.L. "studied laboriously, and to the exclusion of his ordinary pursuits, for more than a quarter of a year;" and in this period, "by severe exertion," labouring "between thirteen and fourteen hours daily," produced "two hundred and forty-four pages of manuscript" on the subject of Homer's age, &c. to say nothing of his "penning verses on the Fall of Constantinople." The dissertation and the poem were tendered in due form to the Society, and Mr. J. J. waited for four additional months in "daily increasing anxiety, and all the fever of expectation," for the decision of the very learned body. At

length, to the consternation of Mr. J. J. and the other expectants, the R. S. L. determined that the promised gold was better bestowed in their own treasury than in the pockets of the applicants; and a cool notification was given of "the non-adjudgment of the prizes." Now, it certainly appears to us that if the R. S. L. *will* offer prizes, they ought to be content with the best aspirants who will condescend to claim them—and so thought Mr. J. J. That gentleman, disappointed in his literary views, and belonging, as appears from the title-page, to one of our Inns of Court, resolved to try what the law could do in the way of redress, "and applied to a very eminent chamber counsel for his opinion, whether or not the Society had involved itself in an actionable fraud!" The lawyer, however, discovered that the agreement was a *nudum pactum*, and Mr. J. J.'s hopes vanished for ever. Still, however, the pleasures of vituperation were left him; and many are the hard names which he has unsparingly heaped upon the unfortunate R. S. L. "Awkward, unfeeling, and cool impudence"—"impudent cheat"—"unmannerly and impertinent"—"swindling transaction"—"flagrant and downright falsehood," &c. &c. Such are some of the first-fruits of the labours of the R. S. L. towards "purifying and fixing their native language."

With regard to the merits of Mr. Jones's poems we shall only observe, that they might have been worse. A few of the pieces at the conclusion of the volume are pleasingly written.

THE EVENING STAR.

I come from the place of my rest,
 When day has gone down to the deep,—
 When its glory hath passed through the gates of the west,
 And the small breeze hath sighed into sleep.
 I come—and my path in the skies
 Is hail'd by the incense of even;
 To me doth the hymn of all nature arise,
 And soar in its sweetness to Heaven!
 For me wakes the nightingale's song,
 From her bower of the sheltering leaf—
 The cuckoo sighs lonely the dim vale along,
 A strain like the music of grief!
 I look on the land and the sea,
 When eve pours her tears and her sighs:
 The ocean and dew-drop are mirrors to me,
 I'm imaged in Beauty's bright eyes!
 When she walks in the gloom, I impart
 A ray to her path through the grove,
 And list with delight to the beat of her heart,
 When she hears the soft footstep of love!
 O'er heaven unrivall'd I reign,
 A gem of the ocean I shine,
 My glorious altar's earth, island, and main,
 And the worship of worlds is mine!

Literary and Scientific Intelligence.

The Memoirs of Mr. Pinkney, inserted in the last number of the Museum as an extract from the Monthly Magazine, was written by the Editor of the Port Folio, in which Journal it was published about two years ago, accompanied by a fine portrait. There was nothing in the Monthly Magazine to lead us to suppose the article not original, unless the fact that it is, as we remarked, "much more correct than English biographical notices of American characters have generally been"—should be considered a sufficient reason for doubt.

London Mechanics' Institution.—An establishment of this title having been formed in London, a number of gentlemen met last month to give a local habitation to a society which had already a given name: and, at the same time, to receive the report of the sub-committee, with the draft of certain laws, which, after many arduous sittings, they were prepared to submit for consideration and adoption. It was recommended that the Institution should receive donations of Money, Books, Specimens, Implements, Models, and Apparatus; that, in the next place, there should forthwith be established a Library of Reference, a Circulating Library, and a Reading Room; that a Museum should be provided of Machines, Models, Minerals, and Natural History; that Lectures should be given on Natural and Experimental Philosophy, Practical Mechanics, Astronomy, Literature, and the Arts; also that Elementary Schools should be provided for the teaching of Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, and Trigonometry, and their applications to Perspective, Architecture, Mensuration, and Navigation: and lastly, that there should also be established an Experimental Workshop and Laboratory, for the better instruction of mechanics by the results of experience. After due consideration, the following gentlemen were announced as Trustees for the year 1824.—Dr. Birbeck, H. Brougham, Esq. M. P., J. Walker, Esq. M. P., and Mr. Alderman Key.

An Essay, by Mr. M. Allen, of York, was read at the Hall of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society, "On the natural divisions of Insanity, and on the question how far the mind retains or exhibits its former individuality of character, and how much it is altered, and the kind, and degree, and mode of that alteration?" The paper was communicated and read by Dr. Williamson, and was followed by some supplementary remarks from that gentleman, on the same subject.

Rameses, an Egyptian Tale, with historical notes of the era of the Pharaohs, is announced in three volumes. It has been a vehicle to convey illustration of Egyptian antiquities, and of a great epoch in its history.

A History of the Origin and Progress of the Greek Revolution, is preparing by E. Blaquiere, Esq.

Dr. Martin, registrar and secretary of the Royal Humane Society, &c. is about to deliver a course of Lectures on the Preservation of Life, from the effects of submersion, strangulation, suffocation by noxious vapours, poisons, &c.

The Life of Jeremy Taylor, and a Critical Examination of his Writings, by Dr. Heber, Bishop of Calcutta, are nearly ready for publication, in 2 vols. post 8vo. with fine portrait by Warren, from an original picture.

The second volume of the Lady of the Manor, by Mrs. Sherwood, is in the press; also, the Willoughby Family, by the author of "Margaret Whyte," &c.; Rose Grant, or a Matlock Sketch; a Whisper to a Newly Married Pair, from a Widowed Wife; and Memory, by the author of "Margaret Whyte," &c.

The Miscellaneous Works of Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, are printing, in two series of seven volumes each.

M. Angelo Mai, prefect of the Vatican Library at Rome, has just published a second edition of the Fragments of the Works of Frontonus. These he had discovered originally in the Ambrosian Library of Milan, but he has now considerably augmented them, by fresh discoveries made in the treasures of the Vatican. The literary public will be gratified to learn, that among these augmentations are more than a hundred letters of Marcus Aurelius, Frontonius, and others. This edition, styled the *Palimpsest*, is dedicated to the Pope.

Pressure applied to facilitate Dyeing, Tanning, &c.—It was discovered a few years ago, by Count de la Boulaye-Marsillac, (*Philosophical Magazine*, No. 268,) that thread or woven fabrics, put into a dyeing liquor, diluted as such mostly are by water, imbibed the liquor to saturation; and the fibres having then quickly attracted and taken up the colouring matter of the imbibed liquor, the diluting water remained in great part stagnated in the interstice of the fibres, and thereby prevented the access of fresh portions of the dyeing liquor to the central parts of the threads; and the expedient was in consequence adopted, of repeatedly passing the thread or fabric, whilst in the vat, between very smooth rollers, closely pressed together, so as to expel the watery and exhausted dye, and admit fresh portions, as often as was necessary; and hereby an astonishing improvement in the brilliancy and durability of many colours, on cloth, has been effected. We have not heard that these principles, though so evidently applicable, have been applied to the tanning of leather, using rollers, or otherwise applying pressure, to repeatedly expel the spent tan-liquor.

The following works are in the press:—

A volume of Poems, by Mr. Percival, whose former work excited so much attention, will appear in February, and we have heard very favourable reports of their merits.

Essays and Sketches of Character. By the late Richard Ayton, Esq. with a Memoir of his Life, and a Portrait.

The Deserted City; Eva, a Tale in Two Cantos; and Electricity; Poems by J. Bounden. In one Vol. 12mo.

Memoirs of Rossini, consisting of Anecdotes of his Life and Musical Career. By the Author of the Lives of Haydn and Mozart. In one Vol. 8vo.

Prynne's *Brevia Parliamentaria Rediviva*; or a complete Register of Parliamentary Writs: a New Edition, with Additions and Alterations, and copious Notes, historical, legal, and explanatory.

A Selection of the Geological Memoirs contained in the *Annales des Mines*, together with a Synoptical Table of Equivalent Formations; and M. Brongniart's Table of the Classification of Mixed Rocks. By M. De la Beche. In one Vol. 8vo.

A Compendious View of the Darker Ages, with Genealogical Tables. By C. Chatfield. In one Vol. 8vo.

The Agamemnon of Æschylus, translated with Notes critical and explanatory By John Symmons, A.M. of Christ Church, Oxford.

Aureus, or the Adventures of a Sovereign. Written by Himself. In two Vols.

The Animal Kingdom, as arranged conformably with its Organization. By the Baron Cuvier; with additional Descriptions of all the Species hitherto named, and of many not before noticed. To be published Quarterly; the first number to commence the 1st of February, 1824.

Elements of the History of Civil Government; being a View of the Rise and Progress of the various Political Institutions that have subsisted throughout the World, and an Account of the present State and distinguishing Features of the Governments now in Existence. By the late James Tyson, Esq. Part I. 8vo.

The Counsels of Wisdom: consisting of the Letters of Eminent Men, addressed to their Children, on the Conduct of Life; with brief Memoirs of the Writers.

Journal of a Second Voyage for the Discovery of a North-west Passage, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, performed in the years 1821, 1822, 1823, in his Majesty's ships *Fry* and *Hecla*, under the orders of Captain William Edward Parry, R. N.

Appendix of Natural History, &c. to Captain Parry's First Voyage of Discovery, with Plates, 4to. is also in the press.

Preparing for publication, a complete History of London, Westminster, and Southwark, in Three Volumes Folio, the two first of which will be appropriated to London, and will form an entire Work; and the Third Volume will contain the Histories of Westminster and Southwark, forming also a distinct Work, but on a corresponding scale. By John Bayley, Esq. F. A. S., of the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple, and one of his Majesty's Sub-Commissioners on the Public Records.